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## House of Representatives

The House met at noon and was called to order by the Speaker.

### PRAYER

Reverend Dr. William J. Barber, II, Greenleaf Christian Church, Goldsboro, North Carolina, offered the following prayer:

Merciful God, help us submit ourselves to the truth of Your word, knowing that what we do only matters and lasts if it is rooted in love for Your glory.

Remind us that You are the God who can melt clouds of sin and sadness away. And You, O God, can bring down rulers from temporal and finite thrones. We are thankful that You are also the same God who lifts the humble. Remind and strengthen us to do the same with whatever power we have.

By Your spirit, don't let us forget that Your mercy for all those who fear You is real. Remind us that to fear You is to align our public deeds with Jesus, the one who declares, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me to preach good news to the poor"; the incarnate one who said to feed the hungry, heal the sick, care for the least of these, welcome the immigrant.

To fear You is to align with the prophets who taught us to never rob the poor of their rights, and to ensure that workers get their just pay.

Help us to live out Your vision of love, joy, and justice until we can truly sing as though we believe that You, O God, rule the world with truth and grace, and You, O God, make the nations prove the glories of Your righteousness, the glory of Your justice as far as the curse is found.

Help us, O God, and hear our prayer, O Lord.  
Amen.

### THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the Chamber her approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1 of rule I, the Journal of the last day's proceedings is approved.

### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. TAKANO led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

### WELCOMING REVEREND DR. WILLIAM J. BARBER II

The SPEAKER. Without objection, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. BUTTERFIELD) is recognized for 1 minute.

There was no objection.

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Madam Speaker, the House is honored today to welcome a great theologian and humanitarian, my friend and constituent, the distinguished William J. Barber, II.

I have known Bishop Barber since he was a college student. A native of Roper, North Carolina, Bishop Barber has dedicated his life to preaching God's word of salvation and embracing the least of these in civil society.

Bishop Barber's trajectory to national prominence began when he organized a multiracial, multigenerational social justice movement in Raleigh, North Carolina, to expose the racial and economic inequities facing our Nation.

The Moral Monday protests catapulted Bishop Barber to a place where he is now a nationally recognized voice for the poor. As the founder of Repairers of the Breach, Bishop Barber leads a movement that challenges systemic racism, systemic poverty, ecological devastation, and what he calls the distorted narrative of religious nationalism. Bishop Barber seeks to build an

agenda rooted in love, justice, and morality.

Bishop Barber is the senior pastor of the Greenleaf Christian Church in Goldsboro, North Carolina. He and his wife, Rebecca, have five very accomplished children who have distinguished themselves in their respective fields.

We are honored today, Madam Speaker, to have Bishop Barber with us today to pray over this sacred institution that we call the House of Representatives.

### ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain up to five further requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

### PACT ACT

(Mr. TAKANO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TAKANO. Madam Speaker, earlier this year, President Biden called on Congress to comprehensively address the effects of toxic exposure in our veterans.

My bipartisan Honoring our PACT Act is the largest expansion of VA benefits in a generation.

Now that it is the law, the United States is finally recognizing toxic exposure as a cost of war.

Earlier this year, VA announced that it will immediately begin processing PACT Act benefits claims for eligible terminally ill veterans.

These developments would not have been possible without the work between Congress, House Democrats, and the Biden-Harris administration, and for our commitment to follow through on our promise to deliver healthcare

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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and benefits to America's toxic-exposed veterans.

I encourage veterans to visit VA.gov/PACT for more information on PACT Act benefits.

Madam Speaker, and may I add that Bishop Barber, our guest chaplain today, along with our Speaker, were instrumental in including Camp Lejeune as part of the PACT Act, and I know that America is grateful for this justice to be done.

#### HONORING THE LIFE AND SERVICE OF SENATOR PAT ENGEL

(Mr. SMITH of Nebraska asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Madam Speaker, today, I join Representative MIKE FLOOD to honor the life and service of former Nebraska State Senator Pat Engel, whom we served alongside during our time in the Nebraska Legislature.

Born in South Sioux City, Nebraska, Pat was a man of faith who applied his sharp mind to a life of service to his community and never stopped serving.

After his early military career concluded with Active Duty as an Air Force intelligence officer stationed in Germany, he chose to return with his young family to South Sioux City. There, as a prolific volunteer, he earned a reputation for his good nature and compassion for others as he served on two local school boards, numerous volunteer organizations, and as Dakota County commissioner.

In his 16 years in the legislature, Pat defined what it is to be a public servant. He was well liked. He had a special gift to work and connect with anyone, and I will always remember his cheerful way, even when issues were difficult. He was known for bringing people together.

Pat and his wife, Dee, were married for almost 68 years and had five children. Family, community, and love for his home State meant the world to Pat. He will be missed.

#### POOR PEOPLE'S CAMPAIGN CALIFORNIA STATEWIDE

(Ms. LEE of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. LEE of California. Madam Speaker, I first thank Bishop Barber for that very powerful prayer for our Nation.

Today, the Poor People's Campaign's California Statewide Convening will uplift the launch of the California-led campaign for the Third Reconstruction resolution called Close the Wealth Gap, California.

Extreme poverty affects over 20 million people in California. This is a moral disgrace.

As written in House Resolution 438, the Third Reconstruction, we need the moral resolve to pass laws and policies

that fully address interlocking injustices, which have only deepened during the COVID-19 pandemic.

This country was founded on the moral commitment to ensure domestic tranquility, promote general welfare, and secure liberty and justice for all.

It is time we realize a Third Reconstruction to build an equitable, thriving, and resilient economy from the bottom up.

That is why I am calling on my colleagues to have the political will to make permanent the child tax credit. The most recent poverty data show that policy decisions like the temporary CTC, income support, and nutrition assistance cut the national child poverty rate nearly in half in 2021. This demonstrates that poverty is a policy choice and there is no excuse for poverty in America.

Madam Speaker, everyone deserves to live a life free from socioeconomic policies that are punitive and destructive to their families.

#### MEDICARE PHYSICIAN FEE SCHEDULE

(Mr. MURPHY of North Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MURPHY of North Carolina. Madam Speaker, I rise to address an impending disaster that is about to face patient care in this country.

Not just 2 years ago in this country, physicians were hailed as heroes for risking their lives to save others during the pandemic. Now, when other professions are being given large raises, doctors are facing double digit Medicare cuts beginning in January.

As a surgeon of 30 years, I can say without a doubt that these cuts will either force practices to close or severely restrict the number of Medicare patients who will be seen. The constant attack on physicians who see Medicare patients has to stop.

At present, the cost of seeing a Medicare patient exceeds its reimbursement. That is why most internal medicine practices will not see new Medicare patients.

The constant threat to Medicare needs to stop. We have a growing and aging population. We need to provide some certainty to doctors and hospitals if they are going to be able to plan to take care of these Medicare patients.

Madam Speaker, we cannot end this session without a Medicare fix.

#### CELEBRATING GALENA PARK INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

(Ms. GARCIA of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. GARCIA of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise to celebrate Galena Park Independent School District's very own North Shore High School football team for their second trip in a row to the Texas State Championship.

Located in my district, the North Shore Senior High School is home to a group of standout athletes and students, both academically and athletically.

Through their hard work and preservation, our local stars will now play against Duncanville High School for a chance to defend their State championship.

I am truly so proud of all their accomplishments both on and off the field. They embody Texas' spirit of excellence and go-get-'em spirit.

Stay focused and play strong, Mustangs, because all of Galena Park in the Houston region is rooting for you this Saturday.

Best wishes and God bless.

#### CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF CROWE PEELE

(Mr. CARTER of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the life of Crowe Peele, an NCAA boxing champion at LSU.

Born in Fayetteville, North Carolina, in 1934, Crowe made a name for himself in the Golden Gloves program where he was a four-time champion. He boxed twice in the National Golden Gloves Tournament in New York City and while in New York, Crowe lost two matches. Out of 64 pre-college bouts, these were his only two losses.

Crowe boxed for 2 years at LSU, winning Southeastern Conference and Sugar Bowl titles as a freshman in 1954 before repeating as conference champ in 1955.

During his sophomore year at LSU, Crowe won the top title in collegiate boxing, the NCAA Championship. This made him college boxing's premier heavyweight champion.

After winning the title, Crowe decided to leave amateur boxing and enter the professional arena. As a professional, Crowe had a record of 16-5, with wins in his first 14 fights and knockouts in his first 10. He fought on cards with Sugar Ray Robinson and Archie Moore.

After his retirement from boxing, Crowe settled in Baton Rouge with his wife, Betty, and started a family while operating service stations around the city.

He is survived by four children, including his daughter, Nancy, who proudly continued her father's legacy of service, professionalism, and dedication here in the House of Representatives.

□ 0915

#### RECOGNIZING STAFF DIRECTOR RUSSELL ANELLO

(Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Madam Speaker and my dear friend, NYDIA VELÁZQUEZ, from the great State of New York, I rise today to recognize the outgoing staff director of the House Committee on Oversight and Reform, Russell Anello.

Russ became my trusted adviser and leader of our committee staff in May 2021. Before his promotion to staff director, Russ served under three of our distinguished colleagues: Chairman Henry Waxman, Chairman JIM CLYBURN, and Chairman Elijah Cummings.

Russ is a tireless leader who defended democracy when democracy needed defending the most. Under his leadership, the committee passed landmark legislation, held high-profile hearings, and skillfully navigated complex investigations to hold government and private actors to account.

Russ' sharp legal skills and political instincts have helped to make our government more effective and efficient and have improved the lives of Americans.

On behalf of the members of the House Committee on Oversight and Reform, and on behalf of the American people, I thank Russ for his selfless, dedicated service to our Nation.

#### RECOGNIZING JUDGE STEVE FLOYD

(Mr. PFLUGER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. PFLUGER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Tom Green County Judge Steve Floyd, a faithful leader of our community who is retiring from elected office at the end of this year.

Judge Floyd has dedicated his life to our community with more than 30 years of service as justice of the peace, county commissioner, and now as county judge.

Whether he was leading the county, handing down justice, or just mowing the courthouse lawn, he led with wisdom and kindness.

Judge Floyd had a monumental impact on the partnership between San Angelo and Goodfellow Air Force Base, where his community leadership and visionary ideas strengthened the bond and paved the way for San Angelo to receive three unprecedented Altus Award trophies for exceptional community partnership, more than any other base has received.

Judge Floyd's retirement is bittersweet today. If you are watching this morning, Judge, please know that we are not just saying farewell to a good friend and a good leader but someone who has been an incredible public servant for over 30 years.

We are grateful for the decades of service to our community, and we wish you the very best in your upcoming retirement. Congratulations on a job well done, Judge Floyd.

#### CELEBRATING KOONTZ ELECTRIC SIGNING DAY

(Mr. HILL asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HILL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to celebrate Koontz Electric signing day for students committing to the Koontz Promise.

The Koontz Promise provides Arkansas River Valley High School students with an immediate career following graduation from a Koontz-operated skilled trade program.

Trade programs available for students include construction technology, industrial mechanics, maintenance technology, and welding.

The Koontz Electric Company of Morrilton, Arkansas, is a diversified heavy industrial electrical contractor that has noticed a skills gap between the generations. Immediately, they saw an opportunity to set up and train the next generation of young leaders to lessen the skills gap and highlight the opportunities of skilled trades immediately upon high school graduation.

On top of guaranteeing prospective students a career, the Koontz Promise also guarantees coverage of all expenses not covered by another funding source.

To celebrate and welcome the students who committed to the Koontz Promise, a signing day was held this past September.

I applaud Koontz Electric for their initiative in educating the next generation of leaders in the skilled trades, and I look forward to seeing these students achieve great careers in the future.

#### PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 8393, PUERTO RICO STATUS ACT

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 1519 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 1519

*Resolved*, That upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the bill (H.R. 8393) to enable the people of Puerto Rico to choose a permanent, nonterritorial, fully self-governing political status for Puerto Rico and to provide for a transition to and the implementation of that permanent, nonterritorial, fully self-governing political status, and for other purposes. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. In lieu of the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Natural Resources now printed in the bill, an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 117-74 shall be considered as adopted. The bill, as amended, shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill, as amended, are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill, as amended, and on any further amendment thereto, to final passage without intervening motion except: (1) one hour of debate

equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Natural Resources or their respective designees; and (2) one motion to recommend.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. VELÁZQUEZ). The gentleman from Massachusetts is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. RESCHENTHALER), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Massachusetts?

There was no objection.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, yesterday, the Rules Committee met and reported a rule, House Resolution 1519, providing for consideration of H.R. 8393, the Puerto Rico Status Act, under a closed rule. The rule provides 1 hour of general debate equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking member of the Committee on Natural Resources and provides one motion to recommend.

Madam Speaker, Puerto Ricans have been U.S. citizens since the Jones-Shafroth Act of 1917. That is over 100 years the Puerto Rican people have been Americans. Yet, for those 100 years and more—in fact, going all the way back to the United States' annexation of the island in 1898—the U.S. Government has not guaranteed our fellow citizens on Puerto Rico the full and equal rights of citizens on the mainland.

Puerto Rico has faced multilayered crises rooted in this century-long policy, crises that have been compounded in recent years by natural disasters, the COVID-19 pandemic, and migration.

Puerto Rico's current status prevents the island from enjoying full democracy at the national level. Puerto Rico's Delegate to Congress has limited voting rights, and the Puerto Rican people cannot vote in U.S. Presidential elections, even though the U.S. Government enacts and enforces their national laws and residents pay Federal taxes.

Puerto Rico also cannot set its own monetary trade or immigration policy. They are unable to join international organizations or enter into international agreements, highlighting the complicated implications of the island's current status as a territory.

Puerto Rico's status also limits the island economically. For example, in

granting Puerto Rico the ability to restructure its debt in 2016, Congress established an oversight and management board that had the power to override decisions of the Governor and legislature of Puerto Rico.

Look, it is time Congress recognizes that Puerto Rico has no interest in being a colony, just as we in the United States should have no interest in being a colonizing power in the year 2022.

We are here today to consider a rule that would bring H.R. 8393, the Puerto Rico Status Act, to the floor.

This bill details the transition to and the implementation of a nonterritory status for Puerto Rico, finally giving the people of Puerto Rico a choice to determine their own status. It tasks the Puerto Rico State Elections Commission to carry out a nonpartisan campaign to educate and inform voters before holding a referendum for Puerto Ricans to decide between statehood, independence, or independence followed by free association with the United States.

I am proud to represent a vibrant Puerto Rican community in central Massachusetts, and many of my Puerto Rican constituents have family members still living on the island. Their family members, just like Americans on the mainland, deserve the right to self-determination. They ought to have an opportunity to carve their own path and build the future that they want.

The Puerto Rico Status Act is the result of serious negotiation and careful compromise to clarify available status options and ensure a productive process.

I am grateful to Chairman GRIJALVA, Chairwoman VELÁZQUEZ, and Congresswoman GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN, the Resident Commissioner from Puerto Rico, for all the work that they have done to get us to this point.

Ultimately, the people of Puerto Rico must decide on the island status, and it is up to us in Congress to help facilitate that process.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this rule and the underlying bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. RESCENTIALER. Madam Speaker, I thank the distinguished chairman and my good friend from Massachusetts for yielding me the customary 30 minutes, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, the rule before us today provides for consideration of H.R. 8393, the Puerto Rico Status Act. This is a bill that received an emergency Rules hearing yesterday with just 3 hours' notice, 3 hours for an issue that deserves to be heard through regular order.

H.R. 8393 would authorize a federally sponsored, taxpayer-funded election to be held in Puerto Rico on 5 November 2023. This election would require the voters of Puerto Rico to choose between three status options: independence, sovereignty and free association, or U.S. statehood.

You might notice something missing here. This bill doesn't even give Puerto Ricans the option to preserve their current status as a territory of the United States. So not only do House Democrats want to control how the States run their elections, they now want to control how Puerto Rico runs their elections.

H.R. 8393 even takes things a step further than that. If Puerto Ricans vote to become a sovereign or independent nation, this legislation tells them what they have to include in their new constitution, how they have to ratify their constitution, and how elections for government officers should take place.

My friends across the aisle want to talk about colonial power. What does that sound like?

Further, this bill would completely circumvent congressional authority by not allowing Congress to ratify the option that Puerto Rico ultimately chooses.

The question of Puerto Rico's statehood is a serious topic, one that I am not necessarily opposed to, but it is a topic that deserves a deliberative process with careful consideration and expert input.

There have been numerous hearings on this issue, but there were no hearings on this specific bill. There has been no vetting of legal implications of using this unprecedented, self-executing process to statehood.

This is not a question that should be run through a lameduck Congress on the last day of a scheduled session with less than 24 hours' notice. That is unacceptable.

Again, I am not debating the merits of Puerto Rican statehood, but I am pointing out the glaring problems in this ill-conceived, half-baked legislation that leaves too many questions unanswered.

House Democrats are doing nothing more today than using Puerto Ricans as pawns to score cheap political points with a bill that has zero chance of becoming law.

Let's just be frank and honest about that. This bill has zero chance of becoming law this session of Congress. It is a joke that we are even considering it today.

We owe it to the voters of Puerto Rico to do better than this. They deserve more.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to oppose this rule, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

This shouldn't be controversial. We are not deciding the fate of Puerto Rico. We are setting a process in place so that the people who live on the island can make that decision.

Listening to my colleague's speech, as he mentions Democrat, Democrat, Democrat, Democrat, you would never know that this compromise was actually written in conjunction with the

Republican—let me repeat that—with the Republican Delegate from Puerto Rico.

□ 0930

So I don't understand what the big fuss is about.

But if my friend believes that the people of Puerto Rico should decide their future, then he should support this bill which will set in place a process so they can determine their future. If the gentleman doesn't, if he continues to believe that we should act like a colonizer, then vote "no" on the bill. But this is the commonsense thing to do.

One other thing we heard him say, they are taxpayer-funded elections. All of our elections proceed with the support of taxpayer funds. I don't understand what that is all about. But the bottom line is that people of Puerto Rico do pay taxes.

In any event, this really is about self-determination, and it is that simple. I hope that my colleagues will not only support the rule but also the underlying bill.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. RESCENTIALER. Madam Speaker, I would like to inquire as to whether my friend has any additional speakers.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I will close.

Mr. RESCENTIALER. Madam Speaker, I am prepared to close, I have no further speakers, and I yield myself the balance of my time.

Madam Speaker, I have already talked about the fact that this bill did not go through regular order. It is even questionable whether the committee that heard this hearing has jurisdiction to consider this bill.

I haven't even touched on the fact that the status options that are called for don't give Puerto Rico the chance to keep its current status. The status quo is totally off limits.

We have also talked about dictating to a sovereign nation what is in their constitution. It also, as I said before, abrogates constitutional authority. This has never been done before.

Also, there is no CBO score on this. We have zero idea how much this is going to cost. This also doesn't take into consideration PROMESA which is the financial oversight and management board that helps Puerto Rico.

A big glaring issue here is citizenship. We haven't had a single hearing on how this would affect citizenship.

So you are in Puerto Rico and born to two U.S. citizens, what happens to your status?

Are you a U.S. citizen or not?

That is not considered in this bill.

So, again, this bill is half-baked. It didn't go through regular order, and it didn't go through proper committees of jurisdiction, yet here we are considering it in a lameduck session.

I am incredibly disappointed by this. I am here just 1 day after this bill was

considered in a hearing that was held in the Rules Committee debating legislation scheduled on, again, the last day of the 117th Congress. Again, this bill has zero chance of becoming law. We are wasting the time of the American people.

I have said it repeatedly, but it requires saying again: we have real crises that this Nation is facing. Our southern border is one great example.

At no time has our southern border been more dangerous and more unstable than right now. This past fiscal year set the record for encounters of illegal immigrants, also a record for migrant deaths, a record for apprehension of suspected terrorists, and a record for seizure of fentanyl at the southern border.

The seizure of fentanyl might sound as if we are doing something good, but we only interdict less than 10 percent of the fentanyl. So if our fentanyl seizures are up, then the amount of fentanyl coming into the United States is, of course, up. Yet with all that, congressional Democrats won't even acknowledge that there is a problem at our southern border. Even the Biden administration won't admit the gravity of the situation.

Vice President KAMALA HARRIS, the so-called border czar, has said: "Our border is secure."

That is gaslighting. That is gaslighting the American people. President Biden himself has said: "There are more important things going on."

He refuses to even visit the southern border. That is gaslighting, and that is also dereliction of duty.

Further, House Democrats failed to meet the fundamental duty of funding the government, despite spending most of last year passing trillions of dollars in wasteful spending that has done nothing but driven up inflation, driven up our national debt, and has seen real wages decrease for working Americans.

So now we are letting two Senators who won't even be in office next year ram through a massive omnibus spending bill that was written behind closed doors and without the input of House Republicans.

So with today's rule, House Democrats are, once again, refusing to put forward solid legislation that has an actual chance of moving forward and bringing relief to the American people.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote "no" on the rule, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to refrain from engaging in personalities toward the President or the Vice President.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I don't even know where to start in response to all of that.

Let me, first of all, inform Members about what the legislative history of the bill that we want to bring to the floor is because if you listen to the gentleman, Madam Speaker, you would think that it just came out of nowhere.

On July 15, 2022, Chairman GRIJALVA introduced H.R. 8393, the Puerto Rico Status Act, with original cosponsors Chairwoman VELÁZQUEZ, Resident Commissioner JENNIFFER GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN—I will remind my friend, again, that she is a Republican Resident Commissioner from Puerto Rico—and Representative DARREN SOTO of Florida.

The Natural Resources Committee held a hearing on April 14, 2021, titled: "Insular Affairs Legislative Hearing on Puerto Rico Political Status," and a hearing on June 16, 2021, titled: "Office of Insular Affairs Legislative Hearing."

On July 20, 2022, the full committee met and held a markup of the bill and favorably reported it with an amendment in the nature of a substitute by a vote of 25-20 with Resident Commissioner GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN joining the majority. So the idea that somehow nobody has been talking about this doesn't reflect what the legislative history is.

Madam Speaker, I include in the RECORD an AP article from June 4, 2022, titled: "Puerto Ricans speak out on U.S. territory's political status."

PUERTO RICANS SPEAK OUT ON US  
TERRITORY'S POLITICAL STATUS  
(By Danica Coto)

SAN JUAN, PR (AP).—Hundreds of Puerto Ricans crowded into a convention center Saturday where federal legislators held a public hearing to decide the future of the island's political status as the U.S. territory struggles to recover from hurricanes, earthquakes and a deep economic crisis.

One by one, dozens of people ranging from politicians to retirees to young people leaned into a microphone and spoke against the island's current territorial status, which recognizes its people as U.S. citizens but does not allow them to vote in presidential elections, denies them certain federal benefits and allows them one representative in Congress with limited voting powers.

The hearing comes two weeks after a group of Democratic congress members including the House majority leader and one Republican proposed what would be the first-ever binding plebiscite that would offer voters in Puerto Rico three options: statehood, independence or independence with free association, whose terms would be defined following negotiations.

Congress would have to accept Puerto Rico as the 51st state if voters so choose it, but the proposal is not expected to survive in the Senate, where Republicans have long opposed statehood.

"Everyone, even congress people themselves, know that the possibilities of this becoming law are minimal and maybe non-existent, but it doesn't stop being important," former Puerto Rico governor Anibal Acevedo Vilá told The Associated Press.

About an hour into the hearing, a small group of people including a former gubernatorial candidate who supports independence burst into the ballroom, pointed fingers at the panel of U.S. legislators and yelled, "120 years of colonialism!"

The majority of the audience booed the group and yelled at them to leave as U.S. lawmakers called for calm. "Democracy is not always pretty, but it's necessary," said Rep. Raul Grijalva of Arizona, chairman of the U.S. House of Natural Resources Committee, which oversees affairs in U.S. territories.

The proposal of a binding plebiscite—a measure that has not yet been introduced in

committee—has frustrated some on an island that already has held seven unilateral, non-binding referendums on its political status, with no overwhelming majority emerging. The last referendum was held in November 2020, with 53 percent of votes for statehood and 47 percent against, with only a little more than half of registered voters participating.

Luis Herrero, a political consultant, said during the hearing that even if enough people support statehood, there are not enough votes in the Senate to make Puerto Rico a state: "Not today, not yesterday, not tomorrow. Since 1898, Puerto Rican statehood has been a mirage, lip service to score cheap political points or to raise a few dollars for a campaign."

Saturday's hearing comes amid ongoing discontent with Puerto Rico's current political status, with the U.S. Supreme Court further angering many in April after upholding the differential treatment of residents of Puerto Rico. In an 8-1 vote, the court ruled that making Puerto Ricans ineligible for the Supplemental Security Income program, which offers benefits to blind, disabled and older Americans, did not unconstitutionally discriminate against them.

As a result, many of those who spoke at Saturday's public hearing welcomed the proposed binding plebiscite.

"We finally see the light at the end of the tunnel," said Víctor Pérez, a U.S. military veteran who lamented the current political status. "Even after all our service and sacrifice, we come back home and we are denied full voting rights and equality. . . . We cannot vote for our president, our commander in chief,

(but) they send us to war."

Grijalva said the testimonies given Saturday will help him and other legislators revise the proposed measure, which he said is a way to make amends. He said he hopes it will go to the House floor by August. If eventually approved, it would be held on Nov. 5, 2023.

Acevedo, the former governor, said he hasn't lost hope despite numerous attempts throughout the decades to change the political status of Puerto Rico, which became a U.S. territory in 1898 following the Spanish-American War.

"A solution to this problem of more than 120 years has to happen at some point," he said. "When will conditions allow for it? That's unpredictable."

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, it is clear something needs to change. Puerto Ricans don't want to continue under the island's territorial status for many reasons—namely because while the status recognizes its people as U.S. citizens, it doesn't allow them to vote in Presidential elections, denies them certain crucial Federal benefits, and limits their congressional Representative's voting power.

The Puerto Rico Status Act is a good solution that will allow Puerto Ricans to decide themselves what the next steps should be. We should give them that opportunity.

The gentleman talked about process in terms of how this House is being operated. Let me remind the gentleman—and let me remind all my colleagues—that the last time the Republicans were in charge of the House, the Senate, and the White House—they controlled everything, and I mean everything—the last time they did that, do you know what they did?

They shut the government down and walked away. That is not responsible governing. That was unconscionable.

And leading up to that government shutdown in the Rules Committee we had an emergency meeting, on what? Cheese.

Don't even ask me to explain that, but that is what they did. They had an emergency meeting in the Rules Committee, and it was a meeting on cheese.

Madam Speaker, I include in the RECORD a HuffPost article titled: "House Republicans Called Emergency Meeting On Cheese As Shutdown Approached."

[From HuffPost, Dec. 22, 2018]

HOUSE REPUBLICANS CALLED EMERGENCY MEETING ON CHEESE AS SHUTDOWN APPROACHED

(By Amy Russo)

As the federal government was heading for a shutdown Friday night, House Republicans called an emergency meeting.

Plot twist: it was about cheese.

During her broadcast that evening, MSNBC's Rachel Maddow appeared astonished while reporting on the gathering, which was arranged so that lawmakers could discuss the Curd Act, a proposal to allow some cheeses to be advertised as "natural" despite having artificial ingredients.

Rep. Jim McGovern (D-Mass.) was clearly irked, feeling the timing was pretty inconvenient.

"This is an emergency meeting that we're having here and I've seen some surreal things around this place, but this is really something," McGovern said. "Vital parts of our government are about to shut down in just a few hours, and the Republicans have called an emergency meeting on cheese."

Venting his frustration with Republicans in the room, McGovern wondered whether his colleagues had thought about how the meeting would look to the public, which would soon be faced with the third shutdown of the year.

"I mean, has anybody considered how ridiculous this is or how bad the optics are as the American people are watching what's going on here?" he asked. "By all means, if you think the most important thing we have to discuss right now is cheese, I'll let you have at it."

Rep. Pete Sessions (R-Texas) eventually jumped in to defend the meeting, calling the cheese bill "important to small business," then eventually segueing into the issue of funding for the southern border wall, the key matter that prompted the shutdown.

"We are being overrun on our southern border," Sessions declared.

That's when McGovern piped up, appearing confused, asking, "There's no wall in this bill, right?"

"It is important," Sessions argued back, clarifying that he was "not talking about the wall of cheese."

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, my Republican colleagues seem to be confused about why we are moving quickly here.

Let me explain that simply in the last few hours that they were in charge, as I said, they called an emergency meeting on cheese. Don't get me wrong. I love cheese just as much as everybody else in this Chamber does. But I think the systematic disenfranchisement of millions of American citizens is a little bit more important than cheese. Maybe my Republican colleagues disagree.

I also point out that this is not the last day of this Congress. We will be

here to complete our business on an omnibus appropriations bill. But I want the American people to understand how my Republican friends have acted in these last few days. We are still trying to work out the details of this government spending bill. We are working with Republicans and trying to come up with some sort of an accommodation. We need a little bit more time.

What we voted on yesterday was a continuing resolution to keep the government running a few more days so we don't have a shutdown and to work out the details. It is not the final package. Lots of stuff still remains to be figured out.

But what we said is that we need to pass a short-term continuing resolution for a few days so that we can work out those details and so we don't shut the government down and cause all kinds of chaos because we know what government shutdowns do.

I think it is really interesting for people to understand that 201 Republicans voted to shut the government down. If they succeeded, then the government would shut down tomorrow. They voted to shut the government down—

Who does that?

What are they thinking?

All because there is a small group of people here in the House whose allegiance to Trump and the hard-line rightwing fringe of the Republican Party say they don't want to have any kind of deal. They don't want to govern. They would rather shut the government down costing the economy billions and billions of dollars, causing all kinds of uncertainty, and hurting the American people.

They did that before. If they had their way, then the government would be shut down tomorrow. Talk about irresponsible.

So I also should point out that every Democrat—215 Democrats—who voted yesterday voted to keep the government running. So apparently, Members of the Republican Party do not think they are responsible for governing. They vote "no" on everything—on everything—and they criticize us for the way we do the job that they won't do.

We heard the gentleman criticize President Biden for dealing with the drug crisis at the border, for actually seizing fentanyl. He is getting criticized because we are seizing it at the border.

Really?

Madam Speaker, this is simple. The legislation that this rule will bring to the floor gives the people of Puerto Rico a choice—one that they deserve—to determine their status. It is past time we provide them this opportunity to decide for themselves what kind of relationship they want with the United States moving forward.

So that is what this rule will do. It will bring that bill to the floor.

Before I close, Madam Speaker, I would just, again, urge my Republican friends: stand up to the Freedom Caucus, stand up to the hard-line rightwing in your conference who says "no"

to everything. Put the American people first. Put people over politics.

That is something that I think is not an unreasonable request.

The idea that over 200 of my friends voted to shut the government down yesterday?

Give me a break.

So we are going to do our work, and we are going to pass this bill today. We are going to get to an agreement on an omnibus bill that will help the American people. That will be next week. And we are going to do our job because we believe our job is to govern. That is the responsible thing to do, not shut the government down. Madam Speaker, I urge a "yes" vote on the rule.

Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the previous question is ordered.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the resolution.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. RESCIENTHALER. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 217, nays 201, not voting 12, as follows:

[Roll No. 527]

YEAS—217

Adams	Cuellar	Kaptur
Aguilar	Davids (KS)	Keating
Allred	Davis, Danny K.	Kelly (IL)
Auchincloss	Dean	Khanna
Axne	DeFazio	Kildee
Barragán	DeGette	Kilmer
Beatty	DeLauro	Kim (NJ)
Bera	DelBene	Kind
Beyer	Demings	Kirkpatrick
Bishop (GA)	DeSaulnier	Krishnamoorthi
Blumenauer	Dingell	Kuster
Blunt Rochester	Doggett	Lamb
Bonamici	Doyle, Michael	Langevin
Bourdeaux	F.	Larsen (WA)
Bowman	Escobar	Larson (CT)
Boyle, Brendan	Eshoo	Lawrence
F.	Espallat	Lawson (FL)
Brown (MD)	Evans	Lee (CA)
Brown (OH)	Fletcher	Lee (NV)
Brownley	Foster	Leger Fernandez
Bush	Frankel, Lois	Levin (CA)
Bustos	Gallego	Levin (MI)
Butterfield	Garamendi	Lieu
Carbajal	Garcia (IL)	Lofgren
Cárdenas	Garcia (TX)	Lowenthal
Carson	Golden	Luria
Carter (LA)	Gomez	Lynch
Cartwright	Gonzalez,	Malinowski
Case	Vicente	Maloney,
Casten	Gottheimer	Carolyn B.
Castor (FL)	Green, Al (TX)	Maloney, Sean
Castro (TX)	Grijalva	Manning
Cherfilus-	Harder (CA)	Matsui
McCormick	Hayes	McBath
Chu	Higgins (NY)	McCollum
Cicilline	Himes	McGovern
Clark (MA)	Horsford	McNerney
Clarke (NY)	Houlahan	Meeks
Cleaver	Hoyer	Meng
Clyburn	Huffman	Mfume
Cohen	Jackson Lee	Moore (WI)
Connolly	Jacobs (CA)	Morelle
Cooper	Jayapal	Moulton
Correa	Jeffries	Mrvan
Costa	Johnson (GA)	Murphy (FL)
Courtney	Johnson (TX)	Nadler
Craig	Jones	Napolitano
Crow	Kahele	Neal



Neguse  
Newman  
Norcross  
O'Halloran  
Ocasio-Cortez  
Omar  
Pallone  
Panetta  
Pappas  
Pascarell  
Payne  
Peltola  
Perlmutter  
Pocan  
Porter  
Pressley  
Price (NC)  
Quigley  
Raskin  
Rice (NY)  
Ross  
Roybal-Allard  
Ruiz  
Ruppersberger

Rush  
Ryan (NY)  
Ryan (OH)  
Sánchez  
Sarbanes  
Scanlon  
Schakowsky  
Schiff  
Schneider  
Schradler  
Schrier  
Scott (VA)  
Scott, David  
Sewell  
Sherman  
Sherrill  
Sires  
Slotkin  
Smith (WA)  
Soto  
Spanberger  
Speier  
Stansbury  
Stanton  
Stevens  
Strickland  
Suoizzi

## NAYS—201

Aderholt  
Allen  
Amodei  
Armstrong  
Arrington  
Babin  
Bacon  
Baird  
Balderson  
Banks  
Barr  
Bentz  
Bergman  
Bice (OK)  
Biggs  
Bilirakis  
Bishop (NC)  
Boebert  
Bost  
Brady  
Brooks  
Buchanan  
Bucshon  
Budd  
Burchett  
Burgess  
Calvert  
Cammack  
Carey  
Carl  
Carter (GA)  
Carter (TX)  
Cawthorn  
Chabot  
Cline  
Cloud  
Clyde  
Cole  
Comer  
Crawford  
Crenshaw  
Curtis  
Davidson  
Diaz-Balart  
Donalds  
Duncan  
Dunn  
Ellzey  
Emmer  
Estes  
Fallon  
Feenstra  
Ferguson  
Finstad  
Fischbach  
Fitzgerald  
Fitzpatrick  
Fleischmann  
Flood  
Flores  
Foxy  
Franklin, C.  
Scott  
Fulcher  
Gaetz  
Gallagher  
Garbarino  
Garcia (CA)

Swalwell  
Takano  
Thompson (CA)  
Thompson (MS)  
Titus  
Tlaib  
Tonko  
Torres (CA)  
Torres (NY)  
Trahan  
Trone  
Underwood  
Vargas  
Veasey  
Velázquez  
Wasserman  
Schultz  
Waters  
Watson Coleman  
Welch  
Wexton  
Wild  
Williams (GA)  
Wilson (FL)  
Yarmuth

Moore (AL)  
Moore (UT)  
Mullin  
Murphy (NC)  
Nehls  
Newhouse  
Norman  
Obernolte  
Owens  
Palazzo  
Palmer  
Pence  
Perry  
Pfluger  
Posey  
Reschenthaler  
Rice (SC)  
Rodgers (WA)  
Rogers (AL)  
Rogers (KY)  
Rose  
Rosendale  
Rouzer  
Roy  
Rutherford  
Salazar  
Scalise  
Schweikert  
Scott, Austin  
Sempolinski  
Sessions  
Simpson  
Smith (MO)  
Smith (NE)  
Smith (NJ)  
Smucker  
Spartz  
Stauber  
Steel  
Stefanik  
Steil  
Steube  
Stewart  
Taylor  
Tenney  
Thompson (PA)  
Tiffany  
Timmons  
Turner  
Upton  
Valadao  
Mace  
Van Drew  
Van Duyn  
Wagner  
Walberg  
Waltz  
Weber (TX)  
Webster (FL)  
Wenstrup  
Westerman  
Williams (TX)  
Meijer  
Wilson (SC)  
Wittman  
Womack  
Yakym  
Zeldin

## NOT VOTING—12

Buck  
Cheney  
Conway  
Davis, Rodney  
DesJarlais  
Gonzalez (OH)  
Hartzler  
Hinson  
Kelly (MS)  
Kinzinger  
Long  
McKinley

## □ 1023

Mr. HUIZENGA changed his vote from “yea” to “nay.”

So the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

## MEMBERS RECORDED PURSUANT TO HOUSE RESOLUTION 8, 117TH CONGRESS

Auchincloss  
(Beyer)  
Axne (Pappas)  
Beatty (Neguse)  
Boebert (Gaetz)  
Brooks (Moore)  
(AL)  
Brown (MD)  
(Evans)  
Bustos  
(Schneider)  
Carter (LA)  
(Horsford)  
Cawthorn (Gaetz)  
Cherfilus-  
McCormick  
(Brown (OH))  
Cicilline  
(Jayapal)  
Cleaver (Davids  
(KS))  
Cuellar (Correa)  
DeFazio  
(Pallone)  
DelBene  
(Schneider)  
Dingell (Pappas)  
Doyle, Michael  
F. (Evans)  
Duncan  
(Williams  
(TX))  
Dunn (Salazar)  
Escobar (Garcia  
(TX))  
Españal  
(Correa)  
Ferguson  
(Gonzales,  
Tony (TX))  
Gibbs (Smucker)  
Gosar (Weber  
(TX))  
Herrera Beutler  
(Valadao)  
Issa (Calvert)  
Jacobs (NY)  
(Sempolinski)  
Johnson (TX)  
(Pallone)  
Kelly (IL)  
(Horsford)  
Khanna (Pappas)  
Kim (NJ)  
(Pallone)  
Kirkpatrick  
(Pallone)  
Krishnamoorthi  
(Pappas)  
LaHood (Kustoff)  
Larson (CT)  
(Pappas)  
Lawrence  
(Garcia (TX))  
Lawson (FL)  
(Evans)  
Letlow (Moore  
(UT))  
Levin (CA)  
(Huffman)  
Malliotakis  
(Armstrong)  
Maloney, Sean P.  
(Beyer)  
Mfume (Evans)  
Moulton (Trone)  
Newman (Correa)  
Norcross  
(Pallone)  
O'Halloran  
(Pappas)  
Omar (Beyer)  
Palazzo  
(Fleischmann)  
Pascarell  
(Pallone)  
Payne (Pallone)  
Porter (Beyer)  
Pressley  
(Neguse)  
Rice (SC) (Weber  
(TX))  
Rush (Beyer)  
Sewell  
(Schneider)  
Sherrill (Beyer)  
Simpson  
(Fulcher)  
Sires (Pallone)  
Speier (Garcia  
(TX))  
Stevens (Craig)  
Stewart (Owens)  
Strickland  
(Correa)  
Suoizzi (Correa)  
Tiffany  
(Fitzgerald)  
Titus (Pallone)  
Trahan (Lynch)  
Welch (Pallone)  
Wilson (FL)  
(Evans)

## VA EMPLOYEE FAIRNESS ACT OF 2021

Mr. TAKANO. Madam Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 1518, I call up the bill (H.R. 1948) to amend title 38, United States Code, to modify authorities relating to the collective bargaining of employees in the Veterans Health Administration, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 1518, an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 117-71 is adopted, and the bill, as amended, is considered read.

The text of the bill, as amended, is as follows:

## H.R. 1948

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America*  
**SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

*This Act may be cited as the “VA Employee Fairness Act of 2021”.*

**SEC. 2. MODIFICATION OF AUTHORITIES ON COLLECTIVE BARGAINING OF EMPLOYEES OF THE VETERANS HEALTH ADMINISTRATION.**

*(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 7422 of title 38, United States Code, is amended—*

*(1) by striking subsections (b), (c), and (d); and*

*(2) by redesignating subsection (e) as subsection (b).*

*(b) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—The amendments made by subsection (a) may not be construed to affect the authorities of the Secretary of Veterans Affairs regarding incentive pay and expedited hiring under section 706 of title 38, United States Code, or other similar provisions of law.*

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The bill, as amended, shall be debatable for 1 hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs or their respective designees.

The gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. BOST) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

## GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. TAKANO. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to insert extraneous material on H.R. 1948, as amended.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

Mr. TAKANO. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise in support of my bill, H.R. 1948, as amended, the bipartisan VA Employee Fairness Act. This legislation ensures important collective bargaining rights for all frontline healthcare workers who care for our veterans.

As chairman of the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs, I have made veterans' healthcare one of my top priorities. I know my colleagues on both sides of the aisle strongly support our veterans and the benefits they earn.

This bill presents an opportunity to match words with action. The VA Employee Fairness Act will ensure critical protections for the healthcare workers serving our veterans.

As a Nation, we must invest in these frontline workers at VA hospitals. Our veterans need modern, well-designed hospital and clinical buildings equipped with the latest, most advanced medical devices and equipment and stocked with adequate medical supplies.

## □ 1030

However, all this means little without a well-trained workforce ready to serve our veterans. That is why collective bargaining is vital.

Frontline healthcare workers deserve the right to organize themselves. They deserve to have a voice. VA nurses or technicians should be able to point out wrongdoing without fear of losing their job or other forms of retaliation.

All of this sounds like common sense, and it is, and this is what collective bargaining is all about.

My bill will bring parity to the Federal workforce by ensuring full collective bargaining rights for all VA employees.

Under current law, almost all Federal employees have basic worker protections through collective bargaining. They can become members of a labor union. They have a way to raise grievances and seek redress. They are allowed to have the support of union representatives. This has long been part of the fabric of the Federal workforce.

But there is one glaring exception. Many of the frontline healthcare workers within VA hospitals and clinics are barred from collective bargaining.

Title 38 healthcare professionals, such as registered nurses, physicians, dentists, and physician assistants, do not have the same rights as the psychologists, social workers, pharmacists, and licensed practical nurses who work side by side with them.

I will note that the same professionals at Department of Defense hospitals have collective bargaining rights. You heard that right. A registered nurse has collective bargaining rights at DOD but not a registered nurse at VA. This is the kind of legal contortion that should be fixed.

This probably sounds arbitrary, and it is. A list was written up by Congress years ago and depending on your specialty of nursing care or other occupation, someone taking care of veterans is either able to have full rights as an employee or not, and this only happens at VA healthcare facilities.

The bill is cosponsored by 218 of our congressional colleagues, and it has the support from those who represent frontline VA healthcare workers, including the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations, National Nurses United, National Federation of Federal Employees, National Association of Government Employees, Service Employees International Union, the National Veterans Affairs Council, and a dozen other national labor unions. Further, this bill has the endorsement of Vietnam Veterans of America and The American Legion.

I wish to point out what VA said in its testimony when my committee held a legislative hearing on it last year. "Secretary McDonough has stated publicly and to our workforce that a unionized workforce is a strong workforce. Collective bargaining is a powerful means for a strong workforce which is VA's number one asset as we work toward increasing access and outcomes for veterans, their families, caregivers, and survivors. VA supports organized labor and values in the collective bargaining process with our labor partners."

I agree. This is about building and maintaining a strong workforce, a workforce dedicated to serving our veterans. I will share a real-world example of the importance of collective bargaining at VA.

In an issue that rose to U.S. District Court, the Central Texas VA

Healthcare System failed to pay nurse practitioners and physician assistants overtime. When the healthcare workers demanded what was due to them, VA resisted.

The case was arbitrated in favor of the employees, but VA then used its authority under title 38 to argue that the grievance should not be addressed.

There is nothing fair about that.

This outdated provision in Federal law has become an excuse for VA to deny workers the benefits they have rightfully earned. Stories like these hardly represent an incentive for nurses to remain in the Department.

H.R. 1948, as amended, will ensure that VA employees have the ability to seek redress when VA does not follow its own rules and policies.

Some of my colleagues will argue that this means labor unions will start making veteran healthcare decisions, but this is, quite simply, not the case. Under Federal law, VA healthcare workers do not have this power. No Federal healthcare worker with collective bargaining rights has this power. Nor do their labor unions.

In fact, the current law stipulates that Federal employees with collective bargaining rights are limited in what they can bargain for.

Unlike in the private sector, Federal workers who have collective bargaining rights cannot strike, and they cannot bargain over their level of pay. Pay levels are set by the civil service pay grades each year and are not subject to collective bargaining.

Title 38 employees should have the same rights as those governed by title 5. Title 38 employees should have the same rights as their colleagues with whom they work side by side serving our veterans. H.R. 1948, as amended, is all about fairness for VA's frontline workers.

VA is going to be ramping up hiring over the next 5 years as it welcomes 3.5 million more veterans into the VA healthcare system after the passage of the Honoring our PACT Act. In order to attract the most qualified workforce to serve our veterans, we need to ensure that VA is a great place to work.

The employees who are on the front lines of our Nation's veterans' healthcare deserve and need basic worker protections. A VA nurse needs to be able to ask that their pay errors will be resolved. A doctor must feel empowered to raise medical safety concerns without fear of reprisal or retaliation. Without these protections, VA will continue to struggle to recruit and retain the best and brightest medical professionals that our country has to offer, and I fear that veterans' health and well-being will suffer as a result.

This is about fairness, and I am pleased that the administration agrees and has issued a statement in support of this legislation.

Madam Speaker, I include in the RECORD the Statement of Administration Policy.

#### STATEMENT OF ADMINISTRATION POLICY

H.R. 1948—VA EMPLOYEE FAIRNESS ACT OF 2022—

REP. TAKANO, D-CA, AND 218 COSPONSORS

The Administration supports House passage of H.R. 1948, the VA Employee Fairness Act of 2022, to expand collective bargaining opportunities for covered Federal employees.

The Biden-Harris Administration supports worker organizing and empowerment as critical tools to grow the middle class and build an inclusive economy. The Federal government, consistent with its obligations to serve the public, can be a model employer in this regard.

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is responsible for the delivery of safe, effective, and timely patient care for our veterans, and dedicated VA employees work tirelessly to support our veterans' health needs, including in combating COVID-19.

The Administration is committed to continuing to work with Congress to support hard-working employees while protecting veterans' access to the care and services that they have earned through service to the Nation.

Mr. TAKANO. Madam Speaker, in closing, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 1948, as amended, the VA Employee Fairness Act. It represents the right thing to do for those who care about our Nation's veterans. I wholeheartedly support this bill, and I urge my colleagues to vote for its passage. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BOST. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise today in opposition to H.R. 1948 and the VA Employee Fairness Act.

First, I really think that we need to take a moment to clear up some very confusing things on what this bill does.

Some have said that the VA medical staff are not allowed to unionize. That is not true. That is not true. Today, VA doctors, nurses, and dentists are allowed to collective bargain. Hundreds of thousands of medical staff are unionized.

But they are not specifically allowed to use union grievances procedures for matters of, and I will quote the law, direct patient care, clinical competence, peer review, and pay. These very specific exceptions were made for a reason.

The Secretary is responsible for ensuring veterans receive high-quality and timely healthcare. To do that, he or she must have the authority to make difficult decisions to keep hospitals running safely and to put veterans first. That is the Secretary's first mission, and he or she must continue to provide care even in the worst of times.

However, H.R. 1948 will tie the Secretary's hands, and I worry enactment of this legislation would put patients at risk. Let me say that again. Put patients at risk. The main goal of the VA is to take care of our veterans.

Now, for example, the Secretary may remove a provider from direct patient care because the care they are performing is substandard. I fear this bill would allow a third-party arbitrator to second guess—to second guess from a position that they are not trained in



the field that they are trying to second guess—the Secretary's decision to remove that provider from direct patient care.

My colleagues on the other side of the aisle will argue that this is not going to happen, yet not one of them can say with 100 percent confidence that that is not the case. In fact, it may happen. Unfortunately, bad actors and subpar providers do exist, and when they harm veterans or pose a risk, they need to be removed from patient care quickly.

It is also not hard to believe that the expanded grievance process envisioned by this bill could paralyze hospitals over the issue of patient care, clinical competence, and pay.

In that scenario, care would be delayed; wait times would increase; critical illnesses would go undiagnosed; costs would go up; most importantly, veterans would suffer.

And the Secretary would fail to carry out the VA's first mission and responsibility to our veterans.

This is exactly why medical staff at major healthcare systems like Mayo Clinic, Kaiser, Intermountain Healthcare, and the Cleveland Clinic are generally not unionized and do not allow arbitration to be used over patient care.

Neither should VA. The care of my fellow veterans must come before everything else.

Now, I am going to tell you this because you need to know. I, myself, was a union firefighter, and I come from a union family, so I believe in our unions, and my concerns about H.R. 1948 do not mean I am blind to issues raised by unions at the VA.

Allegations that the Secretary is abusing his authority are something that I take very seriously. It is the job of this committee to conduct aggressive oversight to ensure veterans get the care that they need, and the VA workforce is treated fairly.

Unfortunately, my friends on the other side of the aisle did not take a critical look at the Secretary's use of his authority; there was no oversight hearing, there were no public investigations, no work to address the allegations made by the unions. Instead, my colleagues have moved forward to pass sweeping legislation to turn over Congress' responsibility to arbitrators. I can't support that.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to put veterans first and oppose this legislation. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TAKANO. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume. Before I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GREEN), I would like to rebut some of the points that the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. BOST), my good friend, has made.

I believe that the gentleman from Illinois is misreading the law. H.R. 1948 will not allow the types of impacts that he has described. H.R. 1948 amends section 7422 of title 38. This is true.

However, it is title 5 statutes overall that define the scope of collective bargaining for Federal workers.

Most importantly, title 5 states that collective bargaining does not include policies, practices, and matters "to the extent that such matters are specifically provided by Federal statute."

There are many laws which define the scope of collective bargaining. For example, if H.R. 1948 were enacted, title 38 section 7464 of the United States Code is still on the books. This law controls disciplinary appeals boards. I remind my colleagues that H.R. 1948 would only allow unions to grieve items under its contract with the department, and if it is not in the contract, a grievance cannot occur.

Furthermore, my colleague from Illinois (Mr. BOST) has made the assertion that doctors and nurses don't have collective bargaining rights outside of VA, or he pointed out a specific example of the Mayo Clinic. There are many, many wonderful, great, effective medical organizations that do have employee unions as part of their workforce, and so what he is stating is simply not true.

Hundreds of thousands of registered nurses and advanced practice registered nurses, including nurse practitioners, are represented by labor unions and have full collective bargaining rights. Full collective bargaining rights. We are not talking about full collective bargaining rights in this particular instance of H.R. 1948.

There are whole unions for physicians and dentists that have existed for more than 50 years, and this includes many hospitals in New York and California. At UC San Francisco, over 5,000 nurses are represented by National Nurses United, and doctors are represented by Committee of Interns and Residents, which is part of SEIU.

□ 1045

Furthermore, DOD healthcare clinicians have collective bargaining rights, including nurses and physicians.

Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GREEN), my good friend and cosponsor of H.R. 1948, a member of the Committee on Financial Services, chairman of the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations. He also serves on the Homeland Security Committee.

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Madam Speaker, I greatly appreciate the gentleman according me the time. I thank the ranking member for being here, a dear friend, as well.

Madam Speaker, and still I rise. I rise today as the Representative of those persons who work in the VA hospital in Houston, Texas, known as the Michael E. DeBakey hospital, one of the finest, in my opinion, because it is in my Congressional district, the finest VA hospital in the world.

I go there quite regularly. In fact, annually, we go into that hospital and we deliver flags to every veteran that is in the hospital. We will order a thousand

flags this year to deliver to the hospital.

We give them a copy of the Constitution. We work with not only the administration but also the nurses and the doctors at the hospital. We are there for celebrations. We are actively involved with the VA.

This is one of the reasons why I believe I have some insight as to H.R. 1948. I support it fully, and I do so because it is the thing that every employee here has in our offices.

I shouldn't say every. If you are in management, I think you may be excluded.

But I voted for that to give them the right to organize, and I am talking about here in Congress. I also am a member of a labor union, Local 1550. I am a dues checkoff member. So it would be completely anathema to my philosophy for me to conclude that these nurses and these physicians should be denied rights that I have, when I'm a part of a labor union, or others do—and right here in Congress we have people with these rights—it would just be out of character for me.

That is just not all of it. I understand the importance and the value of the right to organize and to bring to the attention of people who can make a difference some of the issues that are impacting patients that the administration won't be aware of. And there are many people who won't want to speak up simply because they fear retribution.

The right to organize is the right to speak up and understand that you can do so without retribution.

I would also add that this right to organize does not accord the workers the right to strike. They are not going to go on strike. They are not going to shut down a VA hospital. They are not going to have the ability to cause the management to have to take some extreme measures. This is just to give people the opportunity to talk about the things that are important to the patients.

We are really doing something for the patients today. We are giving them more power by allowing the workers to organize.

Madam Speaker, I stand by what I have said, and I support H.R. 1948.

Mr. BOST. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, in response, as we have talked about the concerns we have heard from the employees, how do we really know the bill is needed? Because the Democrats have never, in nearly 2 years of working on this bill, they did not hold one oversight hearing. Not one.

They did not call the Secretary and answer the allegations that the group pushing for this legislation is asking for. They didn't conduct public investigations into those allegations. They simply passed a bill out of committee, on a party-line vote, over a year ago.

Madam Speaker, it is our committee's job to hold the Secretary accountable, and all of the administration,

over these employees. I would have gladly worked with the Democrats to do that. Sadly, that is not what happened.

Now, we are coming out here on the 11th hour of our last week or two of being here, and we are jamming through an 11th-hour bill with no clear idea that it does what my colleague says it does.

How can we support legislation like this in the last hour? That is why they call this lameduck. It is because we try to shove things through right at the last.

This has not been vetted. It did not have more hearings. We did not do our job when it came to what our job is on oversight. We could have handled this a different way.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TAKANO. Madam Speaker, I would remind my colleague from the State of Illinois that this bill more than adequately went through regular order.

We held a legislative hearing in April of 2021. The bill has garnered 218 cosponsors of our colleagues, each of whom has presumably reviewed the bill before they joined as cosponsors. We put the bill through a regular markup, and I have been in regular consultation with the Secretary of the VA about this bill. And most recently, the White House has issued a Statement of Administration Policy in support of the bill.

So to say that this bill is being rammed through at the 11th hour is patently untrue and not accurate.

Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. HIGGINS), my good friend and cosponsor of this bill. He serves on the Budget Committee and is a member of the House Committee on Ways and Means.

Mr. HIGGINS of New York. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of the VA Employee Fairness Act. We rely on the work of dedicated healthcare professionals to care for our veterans who risk their lives for our country. Yet, our laws do not provide an adequate voice for those workers to ensure care is of the highest quality.

The COVID-19 pandemic showed us why that voice is necessary.

This bill changes that by granting all VA healthcare providers the same collective bargaining rights. It means that healthcare workers can have a greater say in protecting patients, ensuring clinical competence, and setting wages and benefits.

It would provide rights for over 100,000 VA doctors, nurses, dentists, and chiropractors, including more than 350 nurses at the Buffalo VA Medical Center.

I am proud to be one of 218 cosponsors of this bill on the floor today, and I urge my colleagues to please support it.

Mr. BOST. Madam Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Madam Speaker, in closing, there are several things I will say about this bill. One of the most important things to realize is that these employees have something that other medical employees around this Nation don't have. They have the Committee on Veterans' Affairs to argue on their behalf, if problems occur; that we would give oversight and give guidance and direction to our Secretary.

Now, there are far too many questions that remain unanswered about H.R. 1948:

We can't say for certain this bill won't jeopardize veterans' care—the primary mission of the VA.

We can't say the Secretary is abusing his authority because the Democrats did not have an oversight hearing on this issue.

We can't say that the bill will really do what my colleagues say it will do.

If Congress can't answer those questions, we are not doing our job. We can't in good faith pass H.R. 1948 without knowing these answers. We owe our veterans and taxpayers that much.

Madam Speaker, I encourage all my colleagues to oppose H.R. 1948, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. TAKANO. Madam Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time to close.

Madam Speaker, I just remind the gentleman from Illinois that I did cite an egregious example of the VA ignoring the conclusions of an arbitrator in a patently unfair way.

Giving our title 38 employees the right to organize and the right to be represented by unions in such cases where a very legitimate grievance arises, I think is a basic principle of fairness, in fairness.

Let us think about what our veterans sacrificed. Let us think about what they put the uniform of their country on to fight for. They fought for our freedoms. They fought for our rights. They fought for basic fairness.

I have often said on this floor, that supporting our veterans is neither about being red or blue, but red, white, and blue. And I say to you that it is red, white, and blue to support the very principles that our veterans fought for. They fought for fairness. They fought for dignity. If you look at authoritarian countries around the world, they not only close the churches down, they not only close civil society down, but they close down real, independent unions, as well.

So if we are faithful to the principles of our Republic, we will stand up not only for religious institutions, not only for civil society, not only for your right and my right to say what is on our mind, but we will also fight for the right and defend the right of employees to organize and to unionize.

In this case, it is a very limited circumscribed form of collective bargaining, far more circumscribed than the very union that my colleague, who is a firefighter, I am willing to bet that his union had a far more robust ability

to exercise collective bargaining than the very employees that we are trying to empower today.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 1948, and I stand squarely behind it.

Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1948, the VA Employee Fairness Act of 2021. Throughout my career in Congress, I have always supported our veterans as well as those at the VA who serve, assist, and treat our veterans, especially those who have health care needs, so that they can optimally enjoy their post-service life.

Thus, I strongly support the VA Employee Fairness Act, which would repeal provisions that exclude matters concerning professional conduct or competence, peer review, or adjustment of employee compensation from the applicability of collective bargaining rights for Veterans Health Administration employees.

Specifically, H.R. 1948 restores full collective bargaining rights to VA healthcare professionals including nurses, physicians, dentists, and physician assistants.

This long overdue legislation grants millions of VA hospital employees the same collective bargaining rights that are already afforded to all other federal healthcare workers.

The ability to negotiate better working conditions and better wages is a fundamental right to all Americans in the workforce.

When this bill passes, it will give a voice to the nurses and doctors who work long and treacherous hours to treat and care for our veterans when they return home from service.

Millions of veterans will live the rest of their lives with disabilities due to service-incurred injuries and physical impairments that resulted after they made the decision to protect our nation and safeguard our freedom.

Our courageous service members have pledged that, on the battlefield, they will leave no soldier behind. In carrying out this sacred obligation, we must not forget those who treat them when they return from service.

I urge all of my colleagues to vote in favor of H.R. 1948, and resolve together that just as we will always support our veterans, so too, we must and will always support those who compassionately treat, serve, and restore them so that they can rejoin civilian life as fully as possible.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All time for debate has expired.

Pursuant to House Resolution 1518, the previous question is ordered on the bill, as amended.

The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on passage of the bill.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. BOST. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

□ 1100

# PUERTO RICO STATUS ACT

Mr. GRIJALVA. Madam Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 1519, I call up the bill (H.R. 8393) to enable the people of Puerto Rico to choose a permanent, nonterritorial, fully self-governing political status for Puerto Rico and to provide for a transition to and the implementation of that permanent, nonterritorial, fully self-governing political status, and for other purposes, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. FLETCHER). Pursuant to House Resolution 1519, in lieu of the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Natural Resources printed in the bill, an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 117-74 is agreed to and the bill, as amended, is considered read.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 8393

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

## SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

*This Act may be cited as the “Puerto Rico Status Act”.*

## SEC. 2. TABLE OF CONTENTS.

*The table of contents for this Act is as follows:*

- Sec. 1. Short title.
- Sec. 2. Table of contents.
- Sec. 3. Findings.
- Sec. 4. Definitions.
- Sec. 5. Plebiscite.
- Sec. 6. Nonpartisan voter education campaign.
- Sec. 7. Oversight.
- Sec. 8. Funds for voter education; plebiscites.
- Sec. 9. Bilingual voter educational materials and ballots.
- Sec. 10. Puerto Rico Oversight, Management, and Economic Stability Act.
- Sec. 11. Severability.

## TITLE I—TRANSITION AND IMPLEMENTATION — INDEPENDENCE

- Sec. 101. Constitutional convention.
- Sec. 102. Character of the constitution.
- Sec. 103. Submission; ratification.
- Sec. 104. Election of officers.
- Sec. 105. Conforming amendments to existing law.
- Sec. 106. Joint Transition Commission.
- Sec. 107. Proclamations by President of the United States; Head of State of Puerto Rico.
- Sec. 108. Legal and constitutional provisions.
- Sec. 109. Judicial pronouncements.
- Sec. 110. Citizenship and immigration laws after Puerto Rican independence.
- Sec. 111. Individual rights to economic benefits and grants.

## TITLE II—TRANSITION AND IMPLEMENTATION — SOVEREIGNTY IN FREE ASSOCIATION WITH THE UNITED STATES

- Sec. 201. Constitutional convention.
- Sec. 202. Character of the constitution.
- Sec. 203. Submission; ratification.
- Sec. 204. Election of officers.
- Sec. 205. Proclamations by President of the United States; Head of State of Puerto Rico.

Sec. 206. Legal and constitutional provisions.

Sec. 207. Judicial pronouncements.

Sec. 208. Citizenship and immigration laws after sovereignty through free association.

Sec. 209. Conforming amendments to existing law.

Sec. 210. Bilateral Negotiating Commission.

Sec. 211. Articles of Free Association approval and effective date.

Sec. 212. Termination.

Sec. 213. Individual rights to economic benefits and grants.

## TITLE III—TRANSITION AND IMPLEMENTATION — STATEHOOD

Sec. 301. Presidential proclamation; Admission into the Union.

Sec. 302. Conforming amendments to existing law.

Sec. 303. Territory and boundaries.

Sec. 304. Constitution.

Sec. 305. Elections of Senators and Representatives, certification, and legal disputes.

Sec. 306. State title to land and property.

Sec. 307. Continuity of laws, government, and obligations.

Sec. 308. Judicial pronouncements.

## SEC. 3. FINDINGS.

*In recognition of the inherent limitations of Puerto Rico’s territorial status, and the responsibility of the Federal Government to enable the people of the territory to freely express their wishes regarding political status and achieve full self-government, Congress seeks to enable the eligible voters of Puerto Rico to choose a permanent, non-territorial, fully self-governing political status for Puerto Rico and to provide for a transition to and the implementation of said permanent, nonterritorial, fully self-governing status.*

## SEC. 4. DEFINITIONS.

*In this Act:*

(1) **BILATERAL NEGOTIATING COMMISSION.**—The term “Bilateral Negotiating Commission” means the Bilateral Negotiating Commission established under section 209(a).

(2) **ELECTIONS COMMISSION.**—The term “Elections Commission” means the Puerto Rico State Elections Commission (Comisión Estatal de Elecciones de Puerto Rico, in Spanish).

(3) **ELIGIBLE VOTERS.**—The term “eligible voters” means bona fide residents of Puerto Rico who are otherwise qualified to vote in general elections in Puerto Rico.

(4) **INITIAL PLEBISCITE.**—The term “initial plebiscite” means the plebiscite required by section 5(a)(1).

(5) **MAJORITY.**—The term “majority” means more than 50 percent.

(6) **RUNOFF PLEBISCITE.**—The term “runoff plebiscite” means the plebiscite required by section 5(a)(4).

## SEC. 5. PLEBISCITE.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—

(1) **INITIAL PLEBISCITE.**—A plebiscite to resolve Puerto Rico’s political status shall be held on November 5, 2023.

(2) **OPTIONS.**—The plebiscite held under paragraph (1) shall offer eligible voters a choice of one of the three options which shall be presented on the ballot as follows:

(A) Independence.

(B) Sovereignty in Free Association with the United States.

(C) Statehood.

(3) **MAJORITY VOTE REQUIRED.**—Approval of a status option must be by a majority of the valid votes cast.

(4) **RUNOFF PLEBISCITE.**—If there is not a majority in favor of one of the three options defined in this Act, then a runoff plebiscite shall be held on March 3, 2024, which shall offer eligible voters a choice of the two options that received the most votes in the plebiscite held under paragraph (1).

(b) **BALLOT LANGUAGE.**—A ballot for a plebiscite required by subsection (a) shall include the following language, except that the ballot for the runoff plebiscite shall omit the option that received the fewest votes in the initial plebiscite:

(1) **INSTRUCTIONS.**—Mark the status option you choose as each is defined below. A ballot with more than 1 option marked will not be counted. A ballot with no option marked will not be counted.

(2) **INDEPENDENCE.**—If you agree, mark here

— (A) Puerto Rico is a sovereign nation that has full authority and responsibility over its territory and population under a constitution of its own adoption which shall be the supreme law of the nation.

(B) Puerto Rico is vested with full powers and responsibilities consistent with the rights and responsibilities that devolve upon a sovereign nation under international law, including its own fiscal and monetary policy, immigration, trade, and the conduct in its own name and right of relations with other nations and international organizations.

(C) Puerto Rico has full authority and responsibility over its citizenship and immigration laws, and birth in Puerto Rico or relationship to persons with statutory United States citizenship by birth in the former territory shall cease to be a basis for United States nationality or citizenship, except that persons who have such United States citizenship have a right to retain United States nationality and citizenship for life, by entitlement or election as provided by Federal law.

(D) Puerto Rico will no longer be a possession of the United States for purposes of the Internal Revenue Code. In general, United States citizens and United States businesses in the nation of Puerto Rico will be subject to United States Federal tax laws (as is the case with any other United States citizen or United States business abroad) and to Puerto Rican tax laws. Puerto Rico’s status as an independent, sovereign nation will be the controlling factor in the taxation of Puerto Rican taxpayers.

(E) The Constitution and laws of the United States no longer apply in Puerto Rico and United States sovereignty in Puerto Rico is ended.

(3) **SOVEREIGNTY IN FREE ASSOCIATION WITH THE UNITED STATES.**—If you agree, mark here

— (A) Puerto Rico is a sovereign nation that has full authority and responsibility over its territory and population under a constitution of its own adoption which shall be the supreme law of the nation.

(B) Puerto Rico is vested with full powers and responsibilities consistent with the rights and responsibilities that devolve upon a sovereign nation under international law, including its own fiscal and monetary policy, immigration, trade, and the conduct in its own name and right of relations with other nations and international organizations, except as otherwise provided for in the Articles of Free Association to be negotiated by Puerto Rico and the United States.

(C) Puerto Rico has full authority and responsibility over its citizenship and immigration laws, and persons who have United States citizenship have a right to retain United States nationality and citizenship for life by entitlement or election as provided by Federal law.

(D) Birth in Puerto Rico shall cease to be a basis for United States nationality or citizenship. Individuals born in Puerto Rico to at least one parent who is a citizen of the United States shall be United States citizens at birth, consistent with the immigration laws of the United States, for the duration of the first agreement of the Articles of Free Association.

(E) Puerto Rico enters into Articles of Free Association with the United States, with such devolution and reservation of governmental functions and other bilateral arrangements as

may be agreed to by both Parties under the Articles, which shall be terminable at will by either the United States or Puerto Rico at any time.

(F) Puerto Rico will no longer be a possession of the United States for purposes of the Internal Revenue Code. In general, United States citizens and United States businesses in the nation of Puerto Rico will be subject to United States Federal tax laws (as is the case with any other United States citizen or United States business abroad) and to Puerto Rican tax laws. Puerto Rico's status as an independent, sovereign nation will be the controlling factor in the taxation of Puerto Rican taxpayers. In addition, Puerto Rico will enter into an agreement with the United States to provide for "Sovereignty in Free Association" between the two nations. This agreement may modify the otherwise applicable tax rules, subject to negotiation and ratification by the two nations.

(G) The Constitution of the United States no longer applies in Puerto Rico, the laws of the United States no longer apply in Puerto Rico except as otherwise provided in the Articles of Free Association, and United States sovereignty in Puerto Rico is ended.

(H) All matters pertaining to the government-to-government relationship between Puerto Rico and the United States, which may include foreign affairs, trade, finance, taxation, currency, economic assistance, security and defense, dispute resolution and termination, shall be provided for in the Articles of Free Association.

(4) STATEHOOD.—If you agree, mark here

(A) The State of Puerto Rico is admitted into the Union on an equal footing with the other States in all respects whatever and is a part of the permanent union of the United States of America, subject to the United States Constitution, with powers not prohibited by the Constitution to the States and reserved to the State of Puerto Rico or to its residents.

(B) The residents of Puerto Rico are fully self-governing with their rights secured under the United States Constitution, which shall be fully applicable in Puerto Rico and which, with the laws and treaties of the United States, is the supreme law and has the same force and effect in Puerto Rico as in the other States of the Union.

(C) United States citizenship of those born in Puerto Rico is recognized, protected, and secured under the United States Constitution in the same way such citizenship is for all United States citizens born in the other States.

(D) Puerto Rico will no longer be a possession of the United States for purposes of the Internal Revenue Code. Instead, the State of Puerto Rico will become a State on equal footing with each of the current 50 States in the United States of America. Individuals and businesses resident in the State of Puerto Rico will be subject to United States Federal tax laws as well as applicable State tax laws.

(c) IMPLEMENTATION OF PLEBISCITE.—The plebiscites authorized by this section shall be implemented by the Elections Commission, consistent with the laws of Puerto Rico and Federal law.

(d) RESULTS.—The Elections Commission shall inform the President of the United States, the President pro tempore of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, and the House Committee on Natural Resources of—

(1) the results of the initial plebiscite not later than 30 calendar days after the initial plebiscite is held; and

(2) the results of the runoff plebiscite, if held, not later than 30 calendar days after the runoff plebiscite is held.

(e) JURISDICTION OF DISTRICT COURT.—The United States District Court for the District of Puerto Rico shall have original and exclusive jurisdiction of any civil action alleging a dispute or controversy pertaining to electoral processes conducted under this section.

## SEC. 6. NONPARTISAN VOTER EDUCATION CAMPAIGN.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Elections Commission shall carry out a nonpartisan voter education campaign through traditional paid media and make available at all voting locations voter education materials related to the plebiscites authorized under this Act consistent with Department of Justice approval under section 7.

(b) VOTER EDUCATION MATERIALS.—At a minimum, the voter education materials shall address for each option—

(1) international representation;

(2) citizenship and immigration; and

(3) access and treatment under Federal law and programs.

## SEC. 7. OVERSIGHT.

(a) SUBMISSION OF MATERIALS.—Not later than 60 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Elections Commission shall submit the ballot design and voter education materials for the plebiscites authorized under this Act to the United States Attorney General for review and the Elections Commission shall make not more than one submission of the ballot design and voter education materials to the Attorney General for review.

(b) EFFECT OF FAILURE TO COMPLY.—If the Attorney General fails to comply with subsection (c) within the 45-day period, the ballot design and voter education materials shall be considered approved.

(c) REVIEW.—Not later than 45 days after receiving the ballot design and voter education materials under subsection (a), the Attorney General shall review the ballot design and voter education materials to ensure consistency with this Act and to ensure that the three options defined in this Act are represented fairly, especially in the event that any of the three options are not represented on the Elections Commission by a member of a political party that supports such option, and—

(1) return the materials to the Elections Commission with comments and instructions for changes; or

(2) before the expiration of the 45-day period, inform the Elections Commission that no instructions or requests for changes shall be made under paragraph (1), but that the Attorney General reserves the right to submit instructions for changes in accordance with this section if additional information comes to the attention of the Attorney General during the remainder of the 45-day period.

(d) REVISION.—Not later than 45 days after receiving comments and instructions for changes from the Attorney General under subsection (c), the Elections Commission shall revise the ballot design and voter education materials as requested by the Attorney General.

(e) ELECTION OBSERVERS.—The Elections Commission shall invite national and international election observers to ensure transparency and confidence in the electoral process. Observers shall be present during the initial plebiscite vote and during the runoff plebiscite vote.

## SEC. 8. FUNDS FOR VOTER EDUCATION; PLEBISCITES.

(a) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated such sums as are necessary for the Elections Commission to carry out a nonpartisan voter education campaign and an initial plebiscite and, if necessary, a runoff plebiscite under this Act.

(b) EXISTING FUNDS.—Notwithstanding any provision of Public Law 113-76, funds made available under such Act to carry out a plebiscite on Puerto Rico's status shall be made available to carry out this Act.

## SEC. 9. BILINGUAL VOTER EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS AND BALLOTS.

All voter educational materials and ballots used to carry out this Act shall be made available in English and Spanish.

## SEC. 10. PUERTO RICO OVERSIGHT, MANAGEMENT, AND ECONOMIC STABILITY ACT.

Upon the admission of the State of Puerto Rico into the Union or on the date that the Government of the nation of Puerto Rico initially takes office:

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Puerto Rico Oversight, Management, and Economic Stability Act (48 U.S.C. 2101 et seq.) shall no longer apply to the State of Puerto Rico or the nation of Puerto Rico, as the case may be.

(2) OVERSIGHT BOARD.—The Financial Oversight and Management Board for Puerto Rico established under section 101(b)(1) of the Puerto Rico Oversight, Management, and Economic Stability Act (48 U.S.C. 2121(b)(1)) is terminated and all duties and responsibilities assigned to the Oversight Board shall return to the State of Puerto Rico or the nation of Puerto Rico, as the case may be.

(3) TRANSFER.—All funds, property, and assets of the board described in subparagraph (B) shall be transferred to the State of Puerto Rico or the nation of Puerto Rico, as the case may be.

## SEC. 11. SEVERABILITY.

If any provision of this Act, or any section, subsection, sentence, clause, phrase, or individual word, or the application thereof to any person or circumstance is held invalid by a court of jurisdiction, the validity of the remainder of the Act and of the application of any such provision, section, subsection, sentence, clause, phrase, or individual word to other persons and circumstances shall not be affected thereby.

## TITLE I—TRANSITION AND

## IMPLEMENTATION — INDEPENDENCE

## SEC. 101. CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION.

(a) ELECTION OF DELEGATES.—Not later than 6 months after the effective date of certification of a plebiscite result under this Act in favor of independence, the legislature of Puerto Rico shall provide for the election of delegates to a constitutional Convention to formulate and draft a Constitution for the nation of Puerto Rico.

(b) ELIGIBLE VOTERS.—All eligible voters may vote in the election of delegates to the constitutional Convention.

(c) GENERAL APPLICABILITY OF ELECTORAL LAW.—The laws of the territory of Puerto Rico relating to the electoral process shall apply to a special election held under this Act.

(d) INITIAL MEETING.—Not later than 3 months after the election of delegates to the constitutional Convention, the elected delegates shall meet at such time and place as the legislature of Puerto Rico shall determine. The initial meeting shall constitute the establishment of the constitutional Convention.

## SEC. 102. CHARACTER OF THE CONSTITUTION.

The constitutional Convention under section 101 shall formulate and draft a Constitution for Puerto Rico that guarantees the protection of fundamental human rights, including—

(1) due process and equal protection under the law;

(2) freedom of speech, press, assembly, association, and religion;

(3) the rights of the accused;

(4) any other economic, social, and cultural rights as the constitutional Convention may deem appropriate and necessary; and

(5) provisions to ensure that no individual born in the nation of Puerto Rico shall be stateless at birth.

## SEC. 103. SUBMISSION; RATIFICATION.

(a) SUBMISSION.—Not later than one year after the establishment of the constitutional Convention, the Constitution formulated and drafted by the constitutional Convention shall be submitted to the eligible voters of Puerto Rico for ratification or rejection in a special election.

(b) MANNER OF ELECTION.—The special election held under this subsection shall be held in the manner prescribed by the legislature of Puerto Rico.

**SEC. 104. ELECTION OF OFFICERS.**

(a) *IN GENERAL.*—Not later than one month after the ratification of the Constitution under section 103, the Governor of the territory of Puerto Rico shall issue a proclamation calling for the election of such officers of the nation of Puerto Rico as may be required by the ratified Constitution.

(b) *REJECTION.*—If the special election results in rejection of the Constitution, the process provided for in sections 101 through 103 shall be repeated, except that section 101(a) shall be applied by substituting—

(1) “the special election” for “a plebiscite”;

(2) “rejecting of the Constitution” for “in favor of independence”.

(c) *DEADLINE; PROCEDURES.*—The election under subsection (a) shall be held—

(1) not later than 6 months after the date of ratification of the Constitution; and

(2) in accordance with the procedures and requirements established in the Constitution of the nation of Puerto Rico.

(d) *CERTIFICATION OF RESULTS.*—Not later than 10 days after the election of officers under subsection (a), the Elections Commission shall certify the results of the election. The Governor of the territory of Puerto Rico shall inform the results of the election to the President of the United States, the President pro tempore of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate, and the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives.

**SEC. 105. CONFORMING AMENDMENTS TO EXISTING LAW.**

(a) *REVIEW.*—Not later than 30 days after the initial meeting of a constitutional Convention under section 101(d), the President shall initiate a review of Federal law with respect to Puerto Rico, including those regarding—

(1) taxation of persons and businesses;

(2) health care;

(3) housing;

(4) transportation;

(5) education; and

(6) entitlement programs.

(b) *RECOMMENDATIONS.*—Not later than one year after the date on which the President initiates a review under subsection (a), the President shall submit recommendations to Congress for changes to Federal law identified during such review, as the President deems appropriate.

**SEC. 106. JOINT TRANSITION COMMISSION.**

(a) *APPOINTMENT.*—Not later than 3 months after the establishment of a constitutional Convention under section 101(d), a Joint Transition Commission shall be appointed in equal numbers by the President of the United States and the presiding officer of the Constitutional Convention of Puerto Rico.

(b) *DUTIES.*—The Joint Transition Commission shall be responsible for expediting the orderly transfer of all functions currently exercised by the Federal Government in Puerto Rico, or in relation to Puerto Rico to the nation of Puerto Rico, and shall recommend to Congress any appropriate legislation to carry out such transfer.

(c) *COLLABORATION.*—The Government of the territory of Puerto Rico and the agencies of the Government of the United States shall collaborate with the Joint Transition Commission and subsequently the officers of the nation of Puerto Rico, to provide for the orderly transfer of the functions under subsection (b).

**SEC. 107. PROCLAMATIONS BY PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES; HEAD OF STATE OF PUERTO RICO.**

(a) *PROCLAMATION.*—Not later than one month after the official certification of the elected officers of the nation of Puerto Rico under section 104(d), the President of the United States shall by proclamation—

(1) withdraw and surrender all rights of possession, supervision, jurisdiction, control, or

sovereignty then existing and exercised by the United States over the territory and residents of Puerto Rico;

(2) recognize, on behalf of the United States of America, the independence of the nation of Puerto Rico and the authority of the government instituted by eligible voters of Puerto Rico under the Constitution of their own adoption; and

(3) state that the effective date of withdrawal of the sovereignty of the United States and recognition of independence shall be the same as the date of the proclamation.

(b) *COPY OF PROCLAMATION FORWARDED.*—The President of the United States shall forward a copy of the proclamation issued under subsection (a) not later than one week after signature to the presiding officer of the Constitutional Convention of Puerto Rico, the officer elected as head of state of the nation, the President pro tempore of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, and the House Committee on Natural Resources.

(c) *DATE GOVERNMENT TO TAKE OFFICE.*—Not later than one week after the date of receipt of the Presidential proclamation and with the advice of the officer elected as head of state of the nation, the presiding officer of the constitutional Convention shall determine the date on which the Government of the nation shall take office, and shall so notify the Governor of the territory of Puerto Rico, the President of the United States, the President pro tempore of the United States Senate, and the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives.

**SEC. 108. LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS.**

Upon the proclamation of independence as provided in this title, and except as otherwise provided in this title or in any separate agreements thereafter concluded between the United States and the nation of Puerto Rico—

(1) all property, rights and interests which the United States may have acquired over Puerto Rico by virtue of the Treaty of Paris of 1898, and thereafter by cession, purchase, or eminent domain, with the exception of such land and other property, rights, or interests as may have been sold or otherwise legally disposed of prior to the proclamation of Independence, shall vest ipso facto in the nation of Puerto Rico; and

(2) except as provided in section 110, all laws of the United States applicable to the territory of Puerto Rico immediately prior to the proclamation of Independence shall no longer apply in the nation of Puerto Rico.

**SEC. 109. JUDICIAL PRONOUNCEMENTS.**

(a) *JUDGMENTS BEFORE PROCLAMATION.*—The nation of Puerto Rico shall recognize and give effect to all orders and judgments rendered by United States or territorial courts before the date of the proclamation of independence pursuant to the laws of the United States then applicable to the territory of Puerto Rico.

(b) *CONTINUITY OF PENDING PROCEEDINGS.*—All judicial proceedings pending in the courts of the territory of Puerto Rico on the day of the proclamation of independence shall be continued in the corresponding courts under the Constitution of the nation of Puerto Rico.

(c) *TRANSFER OF JUDICIAL POWER.*—Upon the proclamation of independence, the judicial power of the United States shall no longer extend to Puerto Rico. All proceedings pending in the United States District Court for the District of Puerto Rico shall be transferred to the corresponding Puerto Rican courts of competence or other competent judicial authority under the Constitution of the nation of Puerto Rico for disposition in conformity with laws applicable at the time when the controversy in process arose. All proceedings pending in the United States Court of Appeals for the First Circuit, or in the Supreme Court of the United States, that initiated in, or that could have been initiated in,

the courts of the territory or in the United States District Court for the District of Puerto Rico shall continue until their final disposition and shall be submitted to the competent authority of the nation of Puerto Rico for proper execution: Provided, That neither the United States nor any of its officers is a party, in which case any final judgment shall be properly executed by the competent authority of the United States.

**SEC. 110. CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION LAWS AFTER PUERTO RICAN INDEPENDENCE.**

(a) *IN GENERAL.*—

(1) *PUERTO RICAN NATIONALITY.*—After the effective date of independence, the citizenship status of each individual born in Puerto Rico shall be determined in accordance with the Constitution and laws of the nation of Puerto Rico.

(2) *UNITED STATES IMMIGRATION LAWS.*—Except as described in this section, after the effective date of independence citizens of Puerto Rico seeking to enter into the United States or obtain citizenship in the United States shall be subject to the immigration laws of the United States (as such term is defined in section 101 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101)).

(b) *EFFECT OF PUERTO RICAN CITIZENSHIP.*—Nothing in this Act precludes or limits the applicability of section 349 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1481), except that the provision of citizenship by the laws of Puerto Rico shall not constitute or otherwise serve as the basis of loss, or relinquishment of United States citizenship under such section.

(c) *CITIZENSHIP AT BIRTH AFTER INDEPENDENCE.*—An individual born in Puerto Rico after the effective date of independence to at least one parent who became a United States citizen under section 302 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1402) is not a United States citizen at birth under subsections (c), (d), or (g) of section 301 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1401(c), (d) or (g)).

(d) *TRAVEL AND WORK AUTHORIZATION.*—

(1) Any person in the following categories may enter, lawfully engage in occupations, and establish residence as a nonimmigrant in the United States and its territories and possessions without regard to paragraphs (5)(A) and (7) of section 212(a) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1182(a); (5)(A) and (7))—

(A) a person who acquires the citizenship of Puerto Rico, at birth, on or after the effective date of independence; or

(B) a naturalized citizen of Puerto Rico, who has been an actual resident there for not less than five years after attaining such naturalization and who holds a proof of such residence. Such persons shall be considered to have the permission of the Secretary of Homeland Security to accept employment in the United States.

(2) The right of such persons to establish habitual residence in a territory or possession of the United States may, however, be subjected to nondiscriminatory limitations provided for—

(A) in statutes or regulations of the United States; or

(B) in those statutes or regulations of the territory or possession concerned which are authorized by the laws of the United States.

(3) This subsection shall expire 25 years after the date of independence.

(e) *CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.*—

(1) *IN GENERAL.*—Section 101 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101) is amended by striking “Puerto Rico,” in subsection (a) paragraph (36) and in subsection (a) paragraph (38).

(2) *PRIOR TO INDEPENDENCE.*—Puerto Rico shall be considered to be in the United States, as such term is defined in section 101(a)(38) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101(a)(38)) prior to the effective date of independence.

(f) *RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.*—Nothing in this section shall limit the power and authority of the United States to change policy requirements for United States citizenship.

**SEC. 111. INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS TO ECONOMIC BENEFITS AND GRANTS.**

(a) **RIGHTS AND BENEFITS.**—All vested rights and benefits which accrue to residents of the territory of Puerto Rico under the laws of the United States from past services or contributions, such as rights and benefits for veterans or relatives of veterans of the Armed Forces of the United States, retired Government employees, or beneficiaries of old age, disability, or survivors' insurance benefits under the Social Security Act, shall not be interrupted after the proclamation of independence but will continue until such time as said rights and benefits are completely extinguished according to the applicable laws of the United States. All services which must be rendered as part of these rights and benefits shall be made available through the Government of the nation of Puerto Rico in accordance with agreements reached by the two nations.

(b) **SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM.**—Notwithstanding the provisions in subsection (a), all contributions made by employees and employers in Puerto Rico to the Social Security system with respect to persons who, upon the proclamation of independence, are residents of the nation of Puerto Rico and are not yet eligible for old age, disability, or survivors' insurance benefits under the system, shall be transferred to the Government of the nation of Puerto Rico once said Government establishes its own social security system. The Government of the nation of Puerto Rico may not use these funds for any purpose other than the establishment and operation of a social security system. Upon the transfer described herein, the obligations of the United States Government under the Social Security Act with respect to such residents of the nation of Puerto Rico shall cease.

(c) **OTHER FEDERAL TRANSFER PAYMENTS.**—

(1) **BLOCK GRANTS.**—All other Federal transfer payments to individuals and to the Government of the territory of Puerto Rico shall be maintained in the form of annual block grants to be used discretionally by the Government of the nation of Puerto Rico.

(2) **ANNUAL AGGREGATE FUNDING.**—During the ten fiscal years following the proclamation of independence, the annual block grants shall amount to the annual aggregate funding of all programs which currently extend to the territory of Puerto Rico, or of all programs which shall have been extended to the territory of Puerto Rico during the fiscal year immediately prior to the proclamation of independence, whichever shall be greater.

(3) **DECREASE IN AMOUNT.**—The annual block grants shall decrease thereafter on a straight-line basis, at the rate of ten percent each year, beginning on the eleventh fiscal year after the proclamation of independence. At any time during the aforementioned transition period the terms of this subsection may be modified by agreement between the United States and the nation of Puerto Rico.

**TITLE II—TRANSITION AND IMPLEMENTATION — SOVEREIGNTY IN FREE ASSOCIATION WITH THE UNITED STATES****SEC. 201. CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION.**

(a) **ELECTION OF DELEGATES.**—Not later than 6 months after the effective date of certification of a plebiscite result under this Act in favor of Sovereignty in Free Association with the United States, the legislature of Puerto Rico shall provide for the election of delegates to a constitutional Convention to formulate and draft a Constitution for the nation of Puerto Rico.

(b) **ELIGIBLE VOTERS.**—All eligible voters may vote in the election of delegates to the constitutional Convention.

(c) **GENERAL APPLICABILITY OF ELECTORAL LAW.**—The laws of the territory of Puerto Rico relating to the electoral process shall apply to a special election held under this Act.

(d) **INITIAL MEETING.**—Not later than 3 months after the election of delegates to the con-

stitutional Convention, the elected delegates shall meet at such time and place as the legislature of Puerto Rico shall determine. The initial meeting shall constitute the establishment of the constitutional Convention.

**SEC. 202. CHARACTER OF THE CONSTITUTION.**

The constitutional Convention under section 201 shall formulate and draft a Constitution for Puerto Rico that guarantees the protection of fundamental human rights, including—

(1) due process and equal protection under the law;

(2) freedom of speech, press, assembly, association, and religion;

(3) the rights of the accused;

(4) any other economic, social, and cultural rights as the constitutional Convention may deem appropriate and necessary; and

(5) provisions to ensure that no individual born in the nation of Puerto Rico shall be stateless at birth.

**SEC. 203. SUBMISSION; RATIFICATION.**

(a) **SUBMISSION.**—Not later than 2 years after the establishment of the constitutional Convention, the Constitution formulated and drafted by the constitutional Convention shall be submitted to the eligible voters of Puerto Rico for ratification or rejection in a special election.

(b) **MANNER OF ELECTION.**—The special election held under this subsection shall be held in the manner prescribed by the legislature of Puerto Rico.

**SEC. 204. ELECTION OF OFFICERS.**

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than one month after the ratification of the Constitution under section 203, the Governor of the territory of Puerto Rico shall issue a proclamation calling for the election of such officers of the nation of Puerto Rico as may be required by the ratified Constitution.

(b) **REJECTION.**—If the special election results in rejection of the Constitution, the process provided for in sections 201 through 203 shall be repeated, except that section 201(a) shall be applied by substituting—

(1) "the special election" for "a plebiscite"; and

(2) "rejecting the Constitution" for "in favor of sovereignty in free association with the United States".

(c) **DEADLINE; PROCEDURES.**—The election under subsection (a) shall be held—

(1) not later than 6 months after the date of ratification of the Constitution; and

(2) in accordance with the procedures and requirements established in the Constitution of the nation of Puerto Rico.

(d) **CERTIFICATION OF RESULTS.**—Not later than 10 days after the election of officers under subsection (a), the Elections Commission shall certify the results of the election. The Governor of the territory of Puerto Rico shall inform the results of the election to the President of the United States, the President pro tempore of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate, and the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives.

**SEC. 205. PROCLAMATIONS BY PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES; HEAD OF STATE OF PUERTO RICO.**

(a) **PROCLAMATION.**—Not later than one month after the official certification of the elected officers of the nation of Puerto Rico under section 204, the President of the United States shall by proclamation—

(1) withdraw and surrender all rights of possession, supervision, jurisdiction, control, or sovereignty then existing and exercised by the United States over the territory and residents of Puerto Rico;

(2) recognize, on behalf of the United States of America, the international sovereignty through free association of the nation of Puerto Rico and the authority of the government instituted by eligible voters of Puerto Rico under the Constitution of their own adoption; and

(3) state that the effective date of withdrawal of the sovereignty of the United States and recognition of international sovereignty through free association shall be the same as the date of the proclamation.

(b) **COPY OF PROCLAMATION FORWARDED.**—The President of the United States shall forward a copy of the proclamation issued under subsection (a) not later than one week after signature to the presiding officer of the Constitutional Convention of Puerto Rico, the officer elected as head of state of the nation, the President pro tempore of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, and the House Committee on Natural Resources.

(c) **DATE GOVERNMENT TO TAKE OFFICE.**—Not later than one week after the date of receipt of the Presidential proclamation and with the advice of the officer elected as head of state of the nation, the presiding officer of the constitutional Convention shall determine the date on which the Government of the nation shall take office, and shall so notify the Governor of the territory of Puerto Rico, the President of the United States, the President pro tempore of the United States Senate, and the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives.

**SEC. 206. LEGAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS.**

Upon the proclamation of international sovereignty through free association as provided in this title, and except as otherwise provided in this title or in any separate agreements thereafter concluded between the United States and the nation of Puerto Rico—

(1) all property, rights and interests which the United States may have acquired over Puerto Rico by virtue of the Treaty of Paris of 1898, and thereafter by cession, purchase, or eminent domain, with the exception of such land and other property, rights, or interests as may have been sold or otherwise legally disposed of prior to the proclamation of international sovereignty through free association, shall vest ipso facto in the nation of Puerto Rico; and

(2) except as provided in section 209, all laws of the United States applicable to the territory of Puerto Rico immediately prior to the proclamation of international sovereignty through free association shall no longer apply in the nation of Puerto Rico.

**SEC. 207. JUDICIAL PRONOUNCEMENTS.**

(a) **JUDGMENTS BEFORE PROCLAMATION.**—The nation of Puerto Rico shall recognize and give effect to all orders and judgments rendered by United States or territorial courts before the date of the proclamation of international sovereignty through free association pursuant to the laws of the United States then applicable to the territory of Puerto Rico.

(b) **CONTINUITY OF PENDING PROCEEDINGS.**—All judicial proceedings pending in the courts of the territory of Puerto Rico on the day of the proclamation of international sovereignty through free association shall be continued in the corresponding courts under the Constitution of the nation of Puerto Rico.

(c) **TRANSFER OF JUDICIAL POWER.**—Upon the proclamation of international sovereignty through free association, the judicial power of the United States shall no longer extend to Puerto Rico. All proceedings pending in the United States District Court for the District of Puerto Rico shall be transferred to the corresponding Puerto Rican courts of competence or other competent judicial authority under the Constitution of the nation of Puerto Rico for disposition in conformity with laws applicable at the time when the controversy in process arose. All proceedings pending in the United States Court of Appeals for the First Circuit, or in the Supreme Court of the United States, that initiated in, or that could have been initiated in, the courts of the territory or in the United States District Court for the District of Puerto



Rico shall continue until their final disposition and shall be submitted to the competent authority of the nation of Puerto Rico for proper execution: Provided, That neither the United States nor any of its officers is a party, in which case any final judgment shall be properly executed by the competent authority of the United States.

**SEC. 208. CITIZENSHIP AND IMMIGRATION LAWS AFTER SOVEREIGNTY THROUGH FREE ASSOCIATION.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—

(1) PUERTO RICAN NATIONALITY.—After the proclamation of international sovereignty through free association, the citizenship status of each individual born in Puerto Rico shall be determined in accordance with the Constitution and laws of the nation of Puerto Rico.

(2) UNITED STATES IMMIGRATION LAWS.—Except as described in this section, after the proclamation of international sovereignty through free association, citizens of Puerto Rico seeking to enter into the United States or obtain citizenship in the United States shall be subject to the immigration laws of the United States (as such term is defined in section 101 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101)).

(b) EFFECT OF PUERTO RICAN CITIZENSHIP.—Nothing in this Act precludes or limits the applicability of section 349 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1481), except that the provision of citizenship by the laws of Puerto Rico shall not constitute or otherwise serve as the basis of loss, or relinquishment of United States citizenship under such section.

(c) CITIZENSHIP AT BIRTH AFTER SOVEREIGNTY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as described in paragraph (2), an individual born in Puerto Rico after the proclamation of international sovereignty through free association to at least one parent who became a United States citizen under section 302 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1402) is not a United States citizen at birth under subsections (c), (d), or (g) of section 301 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1401 (c), (d) or (g)).

(2) TRANSITION PERIOD.—During the implementation of the first Articles of Free Association, an individual born in Puerto Rico to at least one parent who is a citizen of the United States shall be a United States citizen at birth under section 301 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1401) if otherwise eligible.

(d) TRAVEL AND WORK AUTHORIZATION.—

(1) Any person in the following categories may enter, lawfully engage in occupations, and establish residence as a nonimmigrant in the United States and its territories and possessions without regard to paragraphs (5)(A) and (7) of section 212(a) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1182(a); (5)(A) and (7)):

(A) a person who acquires the citizenship of Puerto Rico, at birth, on or after the effective date of international sovereignty through free association; or

(B) a naturalized citizen of Puerto Rico, who has been an actual resident there for not less than five years after attaining such naturalization and who holds a proof of such residence. Such persons shall be considered to have the permission of the Secretary of Homeland Security to accept employment in the United States.

(2) The right of such persons to establish habitual residence in a territory or possession of the United States may, however, be subjected to nondiscriminatory limitations provided for—

(A) in statutes or regulations of the United States; or

(B) in those statutes or regulations of the territory or possession concerned which are authorized by the laws of the United States.

(3) This subsection shall expire upon the termination of the Articles of Free Association in accordance with section 211.

(e) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 101 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101) is amended by striking “Puerto Rico,” in sub-

section (a) paragraph (36) and in subsection (a) paragraph (38).

(2) PRIOR TO SOVEREIGNTY.—Puerto Rico shall be considered to be in the United States, as such term is defined in section 101(a)(38) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101(a)(38)) prior to the date of international sovereignty through free association.

(f) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall limit the power and authority of the United States to change policy requirements for United States citizenship.

**SEC. 209. CONFORMING AMENDMENTS TO EXISTING LAW.**

(a) REVIEW.—Not later than 30 days after the initial meeting of a constitutional Convention under section 201(d), the President shall initiate a review of Federal law with respect to Puerto Rico, including those regarding—

- (1) taxation of persons and businesses;
- (2) health care;
- (3) housing;
- (4) transportation;
- (5) education; and
- (6) entitlement programs.

(b) RECOMMENDATIONS.—Not later than one year after the date on which the President initiates a review under subsection (a), the President shall submit recommendations to Congress for changes to Federal law identified during such review, as the President deems appropriate.

**SEC. 210. BILATERAL NEGOTIATING COMMISSION.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—If a plebiscite held under this Act results in a majority vote for sovereignty in free association with the United States, there shall be a Bilateral Negotiating Commission which shall conduct negotiations on Articles of Free Association with the United States.

(b) MEMBERS.—Not later than 3 months after the establishment of the constitutional Convention under section 201—

(1) the Convention shall elect, by majority vote, 5 members from among its delegates to join the Bilateral Negotiating Commission on behalf of Puerto Rico; and

(2) the President of the United States shall designate 5 members to the Bilateral Negotiating Commission, one of whom shall also be nominated for the rank of Ambassador, to negotiate on behalf of the United States.

(c) INITIAL MEETING.—Not later than 3 months after the election and designation of members to the Bilateral Negotiating Commission, members shall meet at such time and place as the legislature of Puerto Rico shall determine. Such meeting shall constitute the establishment of the Bilateral Negotiating Commission.

(d) DUTIES.—The Bilateral Negotiating Commission shall—

(1) be responsible for expediting the orderly transfer of all functions currently exercised by the Government of the United States in Puerto Rico, to Puerto Rico, and shall recommend to Congress any appropriate legislation to carry into effect such transfer, including any appropriate enabling legislation as may be required by the Articles of Free Association;

(2) negotiate all matters pertaining to the government-to-government relationship between Puerto Rico and the United States through the development of the Articles of Free Association, including foreign affairs, trade, finance, taxation, currency, economic assistance, security and defense, dispute resolution, immigration, economic benefits (including grants), and termination of the free association status; and

(3) endeavor to complete the Articles of Free Association not later than 2 years after the commencement of the constitutional Convention.

(e) COLLABORATION.—The Government of the territory of Puerto Rico and the agencies of the Government of the United States shall collaborate with the Bilateral Negotiating Commission to provide for the orderly transfer of the functions of government as required by the Articles of Free Association.

**SEC. 211. ARTICLES OF FREE ASSOCIATION APPROVAL AND EFFECTIVE DATE.**

(a) APPROVAL.—The Articles of Free Association shall come into effect upon mutual agreement between the Government of the United States and the Government of Puerto Rico after completion of approval by—

(1) a separate ratification vote on the Articles by the eligible voters in the special election held under section 203; and

(2) the Government of the United States in accordance with its constitutional processes.

(b) REJECTION.—If the special election under subsection (a)(1) results in rejection of the Articles of Free Association, the process provided for in section 210 and subsection (a) shall be repeated.

**SEC. 212. TERMINATION.**

The Articles of Free Association between the United States and Puerto Rico may be terminated at will by either party at any time.

**SEC. 213. INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS TO ECONOMIC BENEFITS AND GRANTS.**

(a) RIGHTS AND BENEFITS.—All vested rights and benefits which accrue to residents of the territory of Puerto Rico under the laws of the United States from past services or contributions, such as rights and benefits for veterans or relatives of veterans of the Armed Forces of the United States, retired Government employees, or beneficiaries of old age, disability, or survivors' insurance benefits under the Social Security Act, shall not be interrupted after the proclamation of international sovereignty through free association but will continue until such time as said rights and benefits are completely extinguished according to the applicable laws of the United States. All services which must be rendered as part of these rights and benefits shall be made available through the Government of the nation of Puerto Rico in accordance with agreements reached by the two nations.

(b) SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM.—Notwithstanding subsection (a), all contributions made by employees and employers in Puerto Rico to the Social Security system with respect to persons who, upon the proclamation of international sovereignty through free association, are residents of the nation of Puerto Rico and are not yet eligible for old age, disability, or survivors' insurance benefits under the system, shall be transferred to the Government of the nation of Puerto Rico once said Government establishes its own social security system. The Government of the nation of Puerto Rico may not use these funds for any purpose other than the establishment and operation of a social security system. Upon the transfer described herein, the obligations of the United States Government under the Social Security Act with respect to such residents of the nation of Puerto Rico shall cease.

(c) OTHER FEDERAL TRANSFER PAYMENTS.—All other Federal transfer payments to individuals and to the Government of the territory of Puerto Rico shall be maintained in the form of annual block grants to be used discretionally by the Government of the nation of Puerto Rico—

(1) during the 10 fiscal years following the proclamation of international sovereignty through free association, the annual block grants shall amount to the annual aggregate funding of all programs which currently extend to the territory of Puerto Rico, or of all programs which shall have been extended to the territory of Puerto Rico during the fiscal year immediately prior to the proclamation of international sovereignty through free association, whichever shall be greater; and

(2) the annual block grants shall decrease thereafter on a straight-line basis, at the rate of ten percent each year, beginning on the eleventh fiscal year after the proclamation of international sovereignty through free association. At any time during the aforementioned transition period the terms of this subsection may be modified by agreement between the United States and the nation of Puerto Rico.

(d) **REVISION.**—The terms and conditions of this subsection may be revised as part of an agreement under the Articles of Free Association.

### TITLE III—TRANSITION AND IMPLEMENTATION — STATEHOOD

#### SEC. 301. PRESIDENTIAL PROCLAMATION; ADMISSION INTO THE UNION.

If a plebiscite held under this Act results in a majority vote for statehood:

(1) **PRESIDENTIAL PROCLAMATION; DATE OF ADMISSION.**—Upon receipt of the Elections Commission's certification of the plebiscite results pursuant to section 5(d), the President shall issue a proclamation declaring the date that Puerto Rico is admitted as a State of the Union on an equal footing with all other States, which shall be a date not later than one year after the effective date of the plebiscite results.

(2) **SUBMISSION OF PROCLAMATION.**—The President shall cause such proclamation to be submitted to the Governor of Puerto Rico, the legislature of Puerto Rico, the President pro tempore of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, and the House Committee on Natural Resources.

(3) **ADMISSION INTO THE UNION.**—Subject to the provisions of this Act, and upon the date declared by the President for admission of Puerto Rico as a State under the proclamation under paragraph (1), the territory of Puerto Rico shall be a State of the United States of America and as such admitted into the Union on an equal footing with the other States in all respects. Upon admission, Puerto Rico shall be known as the State of Puerto Rico.

(4) **INCORPORATION.**—Puerto Rico shall remain unincorporated until its admission as a State of the Union under paragraph (3).

#### SEC. 302. CONFORMING AMENDMENTS TO EXISTING LAW.

(a) **REVIEW.**—Not later than 30 days after the certification of a plebiscite result under this Act in favor of statehood, the President shall initiate a review of Federal law with respect to Puerto Rico, including those regarding—

- (1) taxation of persons and businesses;
- (2) health care;
- (3) housing;
- (4) transportation;
- (5) education; and
- (6) entitlement programs.

(b) **RECOMMENDATIONS.**—Not later than one year after the date on which the President initiates a review under subsection (a), the President shall submit any recommendations to Congress for changes to Federal law identified during such review, as the President deems appropriate.

#### SEC. 303. TERRITORY AND BOUNDARIES.

The State of Puerto Rico shall consist of all of the islands, together with their appurtenant reefs, seafloor, submerged lands, and territorial waters in the seaward boundary, presently under the jurisdiction of the territory of Puerto Rico.

#### SEC. 304. CONSTITUTION.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Constitution of the territory of Puerto Rico, as approved by Public Law 82-447 and subsequently amended as of the date of enactment of this Act is hereby found to be republican in form and in conformity with the Constitution of the United States and the principles of the Declaration of Independence, and is hereby accepted, ratified, and confirmed as the Constitution of the State of Puerto Rico.

(b) **FUTURE CONSTITUTIONS.**—The Constitution of the State of Puerto Rico—

- (1) shall always be republican in form; and
- (2) shall not be repugnant to the Constitution of the United States and the principles of the Declaration of Independence.

#### SEC. 305. ELECTIONS OF SENATORS AND REPRESENTATIVES, CERTIFICATION, AND LEGAL DISPUTES.

(a) **ELECTIONS OF SENATORS AND REPRESENTATIVES.**—Not more than one month after the proc-

lamation under section 301, the Governor of Puerto Rico shall issue a declaration that shall designate and announce the dates and other requirements for primary and general elections under applicable Federal and local law for representation in the Senate and the House of Representatives of the United States upon admission of Puerto Rico as a State.

(b) **RESIDENT COMMISSIONER.**—The office of Resident Commissioner of Puerto Rico shall cease to exist upon the swearing in of the first Representative from the State of Puerto Rico to the House of Representatives.

(c) **SENATORS AND REPRESENTATIVES.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Upon its admission into the Union, the State of Puerto Rico shall be entitled to Senators and Representatives who shall be entitled to be admitted to seats in the Congress of the United States and to all the rights and privileges of Senators and Representatives of the other States in the Congress of the United States.

(2) **FIRST ELECTION OF SENATORS.**—In the first election of Senators, the two senatorial offices shall be separately identified and designated, and no person may be a candidate for both offices. Nothing in this section shall impair the privilege of the Senate to determine the class and term to which each of the Senators elected shall be assigned, with the exception that the Senators shall not be in the same class.

(3) **FIRST ELECTION OF REPRESENTATIVES.**—In the first election of Representatives, and subsequent elections until the next Census-based reapportionment cycle, the State of Puerto Rico shall be entitled to the same number of Representatives as the State whose most recent Census population was closest to, but less than, that of Puerto Rico, and such Representatives shall be in addition to the membership of the House of Representatives as now prescribed by law. Any such increase in the membership shall not operate to either increase or decrease the permanent membership of the House of Representatives as prescribed in the Act of August 8, 1911 (37 Stat. 13), nor shall such temporary increase affect the basis of apportionment established by the Act of November 15, 1941 (55 Stat. 761), for the 83d Congress and each Congress thereafter, unless Congress acts to increase the total number of Members of the House of Representatives. Thereafter, the State of Puerto Rico shall be entitled to such number of Representatives as provided for by applicable law based on the next reapportionment. The apportionment of congressional districts for the first election and subsequent election of Representatives shall be conducted as provided for by the Constitution and laws of the State of Puerto Rico for state legislative districts.

(d) **CERTIFICATION OF RESULTS.**—The Elections Commission shall certify the results of primary and general elections for representation in the Senate and the House of Representatives of the United States to the Governor. Not later than 10 days after the date of each certification, the Governor shall declare the results of the primary and general elections, and transmit the results of each election to the President of the United States, the President pro tempore of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

(e) **JURISDICTION OF DISTRICT COURT.**—The United States District Court for the District of Puerto Rico shall have original and exclusive jurisdiction of any civil action alleging a dispute or controversy pertaining to electoral processes conducted under this section.

#### SEC. 306. STATE TITLE TO LAND AND PROPERTY.

(a) **STATE TITLE.**—The State of Puerto Rico and its political subdivisions and dependencies shall have and retain title to all property, real and personal, held by the territory of Puerto Rico and its political subdivisions and dependencies on the date of the admission of Puerto Rico into the Union.

(b) **FEDERAL TITLE.**—Any lands and other properties that, as of the date of admission of

Puerto Rico into the Union, are set aside pursuant to law for the use of the United States under any—

- (1) Act of Congress;
- (2) Executive order;
- (3) proclamation of the President; or
- (4) proclamation of the Governor of the territory of Puerto Rico,

shall remain the property of the United States.

(c) **CONTINENTAL SHELF.**—The State of Puerto Rico shall have the exclusive right to explore, exploit, lease, possess, and use all seabed, natural, and mineral resources lying within three marine leagues (nine nautical miles) from its shore, as granted under section 8 of the Act of March 2, 1917 (48 U.S.C. 749; 39 Stat. 954). All other rights of sovereignty in regards to the continental shelf and waters, shall belong to the United States, except those already vested in Puerto Rico.

#### SEC. 307. CONTINUITY OF LAWS, GOVERNMENT, AND OBLIGATIONS.

Upon the admission of the State of Puerto Rico into the Union:

(1) **CONTINUITY OF LAWS.**—All of the territorial laws in force in Puerto Rico on the date of issuance of the proclamation described in section 301(1) not inconsistent with this Act or the Constitution of the State of Puerto Rico shall be and continue in force and effect throughout the State, until amended, modified, or repealed by the State. All of the laws of the United States shall have the same force and effect within the State as in the other several States.

(2) **CONTINUITY OF GOVERNMENT.**—The individuals holding legislative, executive, and judicial offices of Puerto Rico shall continue to discharge the duties of their respective offices when Puerto Rico becomes a State of the Union in, under, or by authority of the government of the State, as provided by the constitution and laws of the State.

(3) **CONTINUITY OF OBLIGATIONS.**—All contracts, obligations, liabilities, debts, and claims of the territory of Puerto Rico and its instrumentalities at the moment of admission shall continue in full force and effect as the contracts, obligations, liabilities, debts, and claims of the State of Puerto Rico and its instrumentalities when Puerto Rico becomes a State of the Union.

(4) **USE AND ENJOYMENT OF PROPERTY.**—All laws of the United States reserving to the United States the free use or enjoyment of property which vests in or is conveyed to the State of Puerto Rico or its political subdivisions pursuant to this section or reserving the right to alter, amend, or repeal laws relating thereto, shall cease to be effective.

#### SEC. 308. JUDICIAL PRONOUNCEMENTS.

(a) **PENDING.**—No writ, action, indictment, cause, or proceeding pending in any court of the territory of Puerto Rico, shall abate by reason of the admission of the State of Puerto Rico into the Union, but shall proceed within such appropriate State courts as shall be established under the Constitution of the State of Puerto Rico, or shall continue in the United States District Court for the District of Puerto Rico, as the nature of the case may require.

(b) **NOT YET PENDING.**—All civil causes of action and all criminal offenses, which shall have arisen or been committed before the admission of the State, but as to which no writ, action, indictment, or proceeding shall be pending at the date of such admission, shall be subject to prosecution in the appropriate State courts or in the United States District Court for the District of Puerto Rico in like manner, to the same extent, and with like right of appellate review, as if such State had been created and such State courts had been established prior to the accrual of such causes of action or the commission of such offenses. The admission of the State shall effect no change in the procedural or substantive laws governing causes of action and criminal offenses which shall have arisen or

been committed, and any such criminal offenses as shall have been committed against the laws of the territory of Puerto Rico, shall be tried and punished by the appropriate courts of the State, and any such criminal offenses as shall have been committed against the laws of the United States shall be tried and punished in the United States District Court for the District of Puerto Rico.

(c) APPEALS.—Parties shall have the same rights of judicial review of final decisions of the United States District Court for the District of Puerto Rico or the Supreme Court of Puerto Rico, in any case finally decided prior to the admission of the State of Puerto Rico into the Union, whether or not an appeal therefrom shall have been perfected prior to such admission. The United States Court of Appeals for the First Circuit and the Supreme Court of the United States, shall have the same jurisdiction in such cases as by law provided prior to the admission of the State into the Union. Any mandate issued subsequent to the admission of the State, shall be to the United States District Court for the District of Puerto Rico or a court of the State, as appropriate. Parties shall have the same rights of appeal from and appellate review of all orders, judgments, and decrees of the United States District Court for the District of Puerto Rico and of the Supreme Court of Puerto Rico, in any case pending at the time of admission of the State into the Union, and the Supreme Court of Puerto Rico and the Supreme Court of the United States shall have the same jurisdiction therein, as by law provided in any case arising subsequent to the admission of the State into the Union.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The bill shall be debatable for 1 hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Natural Resources or their respective designees.

The gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GRIJALVA) and the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GRIJALVA).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GRIJALVA. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 8393.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Arizona?

There was no objection.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 8393, legislation I was proud to introduce along with my colleagues, Representatives NYDIA VÉLAZQUEZ and DARREN SOTO, Resident Commissioner JENNIFFER GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN, and Majority Leader STENY HOYER, to resolve Puerto Rico's territorial status.

This bill being on the floor today was far from assured. There were many times over the past several weeks when it appeared there wasn't any hope of ever bringing this bill to the floor. In fact, my colleagues and I were negotiating final changes as recently as 24 hours ago.

But with the prodding of Leader HOYER, we persevered. In spite of opposition to the historic nature of what we

are about to accomplish, we persevered.

I commend and congratulate my colleagues who put aside their philosophical differences and worked to arrive at a compromise that we can all support.

Last year, the Natural Resources Committee held two legislative hearings where Puerto Rican-elected government officials, legal and human rights experts, and residents offered testimony and feedback to the committee on the details of those bills.

Those bills that we were discussing were two bills, one dealing primarily with statehood status and the other one seeking a self-determination path. Those two bills were diametrically opposed, and until the negotiations began, little progress was seen moving the question of status forward.

The Puerto Rico Status Act combines important elements of these two bills to present a compromise that also incorporates input from the full range of voices among Puerto Rico's status debate and that would be supported by a majority of Members of Congress. That is the bill that we bring forward today.

We had in-person public hearings, including with over 100 individuals who shared comments and suggestions on the text with the delegation at our public forum in Puerto Rico. In addition to these in-person opportunities for public input, we also published the draft text on POPVOX, an online submission tool that members of the public used to share more than 100 comments, all of which were reviewed and considered while developing the final language.

The Puerto Rico Status Act is, therefore, the product of a participatory and informed process. It incorporates expertise and knowledge from a wide range of stakeholders who have grappled with the dilemma of Puerto Rico's second-class political status for many years.

Finding a resolution to Puerto Rico's political status has been elusive and difficult, and it has been that way for a long time. Recent efforts to resolve the issue began in 1991 with competing bills introduced in the House and Senate, followed by legislation sponsored by our former colleague Don Young in 1998, and finally the Puerto Rico Democracy Act in 2010, sponsored by then-Puerto Rico Resident Commissioner and current Governor Pierluisi.

While each of those previous bills passed the House, as we hope our bill will today, as well, they ultimately failed because they did not possess the necessary elements to end the colonial status of the island through a fair and informed process.

In becoming chair of the Natural Resources Committee, I made the issue of resolving Puerto Rico's political status a priority. It is crucial to me that any proposal from Congress to decolonize Puerto Rico be informed and led by Puerto Ricans.

As a non-Puerto Rican, I cannot claim the experience of Puerto Ricans who have fought for equality and autonomy for their island for so many years. However, as someone of Mexican descent and indigenous ancestry, I feel a sense of solidarity with the people of Puerto Rico in that enduring struggle. We continue to strive for equality and preserve our traditions, as we all do that, and that struggle is a shared experience among marginalized and disenfranchised people in this country and in Puerto Rico.

I am proud to be discussing a piece of legislation, a proposal, today that assists the people of Puerto Rico to directly be involved in determining their political future.

In recent years, we have seen all too painfully that the current colonial territory status is no longer viable and is incapable of providing either adequate political or economic benefits to the people of Puerto Rico.

Puerto Rico's current status is what impedes its economic development. PROMESA and its financial oversight and management board, the shortcomings of the Puerto Rico Electric Power Authority, or PREPA, and the inadequate Federal response under the previous administration to disasters like Hurricane Maria and the COVID-19 pandemic, these are all products of the current territorial status.

Recent Supreme Court rulings have only further clarified that, as a territory, Puerto Rico lacks the same constitutional protections and rights as in the 50 States.

This bill would finally stop offering the problem as a continued solution and would let the people of Puerto Rico choose a nonterritory, noncolonial status for themselves.

I am extremely grateful to all the political and community leaders, residents, and staff who worked to produce this compromise and contributed to this bill.

I thank House Majority Leader STENY HOYER; the Governor of Puerto Rico, Pedro Pierluisi; Representatives VÉLAZQUEZ, SOTO, and OCASIO-CORTEZ; and Resident Commissioner GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN for their leadership and dedication throughout a difficult but very necessary process.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, introduced in July 2022, H.R. 8393, the Puerto Rico Status Act, would authorize a federally sponsored plebiscite to occur on November 5, 2023, and it would dictate to the voters of Puerto Rico three and only three choices: independence, sovereignty and free association, or statehood. If no one option receives a majority vote, there will be a runoff on March 3, 2024.

I cannot support this measure because of process concerns and wide-ranging policy changes that involve the jurisdiction of the Natural Resources Committee, along with several

other House committees that haven't even seen this bill.

The Committee on Natural Resources has not held a hearing on this bill, nor have the other committees with expertise on complex issues of U.S. citizenship, taxation and entitlement programs, foreign policy, and many other matters. None of them have been given an opportunity to openly consider, debate, and amend this bill.

The question of Puerto Rico's political status is a life-altering decision for the people of Puerto Rico. Just as we would expect the people of Puerto Rico to deliberate its questions, understand its consequences, and accept responsibility for the choice, so should Congress.

These issues are far too important for this body to act without proper deliberation. Because of the hasty and secretive process that was used to develop this bill, it contains many concerning and unresolved issues.

The bill contradicts itself, offering Puerto Rico the promise of independence while prescribing actions that should be taken by the newly sovereign nation. How can you be independent yet have another nation dictate what your actions will be?

It promises the trappings of U.S. citizenship without the responsibilities of being a part of the United States.

It is unfortunate that we are here considering this legislation on the House floor after the majority has held backroom negotiations instead of open, transparent hearings and markups. A regular and open legislative process would have allowed Members of this body and the people of Puerto Rico—more than 3 million United States citizens—to fully assess what this bill proposes and what it means for this and future generations.

In fact, the majority made changes to the bill that had even less consideration than the version ordered to be reported by the Committee on Natural Resources in July, cutting backroom deals as recently as this week.

We learned this bill would be on the floor even before we had the text from the Rules Committee. We didn't even know what we would be debating when we learned this bill would be on the floor.

Madam Speaker, there is a favorite Latin expression of mine. It is *lux et veritas*. It means light and truth. This body, this Congress, and this Federal Government could use a lot more light and truth.

You see, without light, when you are in the darkness, you don't know what truth is. If you don't know what truth is, then you make bad policy decisions.

Unfortunately, the lack of transparency seems to be par for the course in Congress anymore. This bill should have been debated. It should have had light shone on it.

This is just bad policy. I don't see how anybody could read this bill and think that there are not problems with it, that there is not a lack of logic.

There is incoherence in the text of the bill, and it is taking us to a position where we would make bad decisions.

Here we are, just a week after this Chamber was left guessing what would be in the final NDAA and while we are currently guessing what will be in a last-minute omnibus spending bill that will, no doubt, be rolled out in the dark of night. This is another example of what is so broken about this process, what is so broken about the way this majority has led.

If this majority were interested in helping Puerto Rico, we would be advancing legislation to address the reliability of the island's energy grid, ensure its fiscal solvency, repair its infrastructure, or meet any of the other tangible needs for the people of Puerto Rico.

We should be treating these U.S. citizens with respect and letting a full and robust legislative process in the light of day take place to address the status question and the many implications for the people of Puerto Rico and for all Americans.

Madam Speaker, I urge a "no" vote on H.R. 8393, and I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1115

Mr. GRIJALVA. Madam Speaker, the only point of darkness that I can see is the greatest democracy on Earth, the United States of America, and what this bill does is provides some light and consistency to that great democracy by saying you must rid yourself of this colonial legacy. Our great Nation should not be a colonial holder of other countries and other futures. This is an opportunity to break from that and to encourage democracy.

Madam Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. VELÁZQUEZ). As I indicated earlier, my thanks go to her for her work, as well.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Madam Speaker, for 124 years Puerto Rico, the nation where I was born and raised, has been a colony of the United States.

Invaded by the United States during the 1898 Spanish-American War, Puerto Rico has remained in a state of colonial limbo that flies in the face of the anticolonial values upon which the American Republic was founded.

Congress' unlimited plenary powers over Puerto Rico are reminiscent of the monarchical powers enjoyed by King George III against which the Founders of the American Republic so bravely fought.

If Hamilton and Madison were alive today, they would be shocked to see how the anticolonial Constitution they drafted in 1787 is currently used to legitimize colonialism in Puerto Rico over 300 years later. Advocating now for the continuation of the status quo on the island is the height of hypocrisy.

Colonialism has destroyed the Puerto Rican economy.

Colonialism has divided the Puerto Rican people.

Colonialism has eaten away our people's sense of dignity and self-worth.

Colonialism has made the people of Puerto Rico both psychologically and economically dependent on the United States.

Colonialism is not only humiliating for Puerto Rico, but it is an embarrassment to the United States—the United States that holds itself out as a leader of the free world and that stands up to imperialist tyrants abroad while keeping colonies in the Caribbean and the Pacific.

Puerto Rico's colonial crisis is not a simple domestic issue as some erroneously believe. Make no mistake, Madam Speaker, this is an international issue that directly affects America's standing and image around the world, which is why this double-talk must come to an end.

The time has come to fully decolonize Puerto Rico. It has been 100 years since the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in *Balzac*—the last *Insular Case*—and 70 years after the ratification of the territorial constitution of 1952. History calls upon us to put politics aside and do right by the people of Puerto Rico.

For the last 2 years, I have been tirelessly fighting to craft a bill for Puerto Rico that is anticolonial, fair, and transparent. A bill that will, first and foremost, put the people of Puerto Rico who—since the days of the 1898 invasion—have remained on the sideline front and center.

From Puerto Rico to Florida, and, yes, to the barrios of New York—the ones I am proud to represent—the voices of Boricuas are now finally being heard. Let us not forget that it is thanks to the vibrant Puerto Rican diaspora from Brooklyn, Queens, and the Bronx that my colleague, ALEXANDRIA OCASIO-CORTEZ, and I are able to walk these Halls of Congress today.

Today, I stand on the shoulders of millions of Puerto Ricans who had to flee Puerto Rico because its colonial condition has not allowed them to live on the island where they were born.

But Puerto Ricans are strong. They have been kicked out of their home and yet have managed to succeed and flourish in cold and foreign places and have graced us with the likes of Lola Rodríguez de Tío, María Libertad Gómez, Nilita Vientos Gastón, Justice Sonia Sotomayor, Rita Moreno, Julia de Burgos, and Mari Carmen Aponte, among many others. I feel so honored to be here standing today on the shoulders of all these women and many others who have paved the way.

More importantly, we are here today for the people on the island: those who suffer every day because the prices they pay for necessities like electricity and food are sky-high thanks to the Jones Act.

We are here for those who have lost all their appliances time and time again because we have failed in helping the island to keep the lights on.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Madam Speaker, I yield an additional 1 minute to the gentlewoman from New York.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Madam Speaker, we are here for those who have lost loved ones after Maria, the earthquakes, COVID-19, and, most recently, Fiona.

We are here today because we must move towards decolonization. The current status is unsustainable, fundamentally unfair, and un-American.

The process that has led us to this moment has been contentious, complex, and full of debate. It is no secret that Members advocating for this bill, including myself, hold differing opinions on which noncolonial option is the best for the people of Puerto Rico.

The consensus bill before us today clearly defines Puerto Rico's non-territorial status options; namely, free association, independence, and statehood. It is the first time Congress recognizes free association as a separate decolonizing formula.

More importantly, this bill includes dual citizenship rights under both the independence and free association options like we have in the Marshall Islands or Palau.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentlewoman has again expired.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Madam Speaker, I yield an additional 30 seconds to the gentlewoman from New York.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Madam Speaker, I fought hard for the incorporation of these provisions because Congress has the moral obligation to offer Puerto Rico the necessary tools to transition to a new postcolonial order. And, yes, that includes financial resources to make Puerto Rico whole after 124 years of exploitation of natural resources and environmental degradation.

Madam Speaker, I want to take this time to thank Chairman GRIJALVA; the Resident Commissioner of Puerto Rico (Miss GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN); ALEXANDRIA OCASIO-CORTEZ, who has made incredible contributions to make this bill better and transparent; Congressman SOTO; and the staff who worked day in and day out.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to support this bill.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I want to be as crystal clear as I can. I think this is not only my position, but I believe it is the position of everyone in the minority—the whole Republican Conference and I would hope it would be the position of all of the Democratic Caucus—that America is not a symbol of darkness.

America is still a shining city on a hill. America offers more hope and more protections for freedom than anybody in the history of the world has offered and will continue to offer that. A country that is founded on the protection of life, liberty, and the pursuit of

happiness cannot be considered a country that is a symbol of darkness.

I heard a lot of talk about colonialism. But passing a bill that tells a sovereign nation what its laws should be sounds a lot like colonialism to me.

Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BENTZ).

Mr. BENTZ. Madam Speaker, let me ask this question: Will the United States be the better for adding Puerto Rico as a State?

The answer is perhaps.

The answer also is that we need to address the issue, and we need to address the issue correctly.

I had the privilege of sitting through a discussion of this bill 6 months ago. I was surprised when it abruptly appeared this morning, because back then I pointed out that as a practicing attorney, I have had many occasions to put together large business deals, and we used incredible care to bring those deals together.

Yet, when I see something that is dealing with not only the 3.2 million people in Puerto Rico but also the 340 million people in the United States being treated with such a cavalier nature, then I have to ask:

Why do such a disservice not only to the United States but also Puerto Rico?

I asked that question in committee.

The bill fails to talk about and address U.S. sovereignty, U.S. elections, government benefits, taxation, immigration, and a myriad of other important issues, all of which need to be addressed. This is not to suggest that Puerto Rico at some point shouldn't be a State.

The question is: How do we go about doing it?

Because if we are going to add two more Senators and a number of other Representatives, if we are going to upset the structure of our Nation with this addition, then why aren't we doing the proper study to get it right?

Because there is no reason for us to jump into something like this and upset the rest of our Nation.

Why would we do such a thing?

It makes no sense.

I was sad to see this bill appear here today because I don't like getting up and talking this aggressively about hard work that has been done by the people of Puerto Rico and my good friends in the delegation. But the truth has to be called out. If we are going to add another State to this Nation, then let's do it right.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER).

(Mr. HOYER asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HOYER. Madam Speaker, I have been working on this issue almost all of my career in the Congress of the United States.

The previous gentleman said: Let's do it right.

This does it right. This does it after years and years and years and years and years of consideration.

I hesitate because I agree, I think, almost in whole with the remarks that Mr. WESTERMAN has made. Mr. WESTERMAN is a Member of the Congress that I respect. He and I work on things that we think are very important to mankind, here in this country and around the world, in terms of our global environment.

America is a great nation. It is a generous nation. I have said throughout the world that America is the least acquisitive great power that has existed in the world.

What do I mean by acquisitive?

We did not fight wars to take property and to acquire countries, to do what Putin criminally does today. In fact, what we did in those wars in which we have participated in was to build up countries, and they are now democracies: Germany, Japan, Italy, and other nations which we have occupied for a temporary period of time to make sure they were free and help them be free. This bill is about the Puerto Rican people and their island.

□ 1130

And to redeem a premise that we have argued to all the world ought to be central to their policies. That is the right of peoples to self-determination. The right of peoples to say: This is who I am, and this is the political environment in which I want to live—by free votes, not arms, not force, but by the choice of the people. That is what this legislation does.

Puerto Ricans and people of Puerto Rican descent have had an important place in the American family for over a century. They contribute to American culture. They help protect America's national security. They support the American economy and our shared prosperity.

They are American citizens. We made that decision because that was our decision to make whether we were going to allow them to be American citizens or not. Frankly, whether they have any relationship with us or not is our American Congress' decision. They are today American citizens like all of us.

For far too long, however, the people of Puerto Rico have been excluded from the full promise of American democracy and self-determination that our Nation has always championed. We owe it to our own values, and we owe it to the Puerto Rican people to bring an end to their island's 124-year-old status as a U.S. territory.

Less than us. Less than Maryland. Less than Virginia or Oregon or Texas or Maine or Washington State. Yes, they are citizens but less—3½ million people are less. We hold these truths to be self-evident that all are created equal. Now, not all people ought to be U.S. citizens because of that comment, but all citizens ought to be equal. That

is why I am for D.C. statehood—700,000-plus people. Citizens. Our people.

They are franchised if they move to Maryland and disenfranchised if they move from Maryland to D.C. That is not right. We passed a bill to say that was not right. This is another opportunity to give the people of Puerto Rico the ability to set it right, and we make that decision.

The gentleman is correct. We don't have to give that right to Puerto Ricans, we make that decision, and we ought to make it. That is what this bill is about—making that decision to give our fellow citizens a choice—their choice, not our choice.

The gentlewoman from New York, a wonderful, dear, close friend of mine, she and I have disagreed through the years as to what that choice ought to be. But what we agree on is it is not our choice; it is Puerto Rico's choice. That is why I am proud to bring the Puerto Rico Status Act to the floor today.

This bipartisan legislation would organize and fund a binding, island-wide plebiscite that would allow the people of Puerto Rico to vote among these three options:

Statehood. That would be my option. If I were a Puerto Rican and I were living in Port-au-Prince or wherever I was living, I would vote to be a State. That is not my choice, I don't live there, I am not in Puerto Rico. San Juan—I said Port-au-Prince. San Juan. It ought to be their choice, and that is what this bill does—statehood.

Independence. They have a right to do that. They are either going to be a State or they will have a right to determine their own destiny, their own status, or as the bill also gives them an option to do, be a sovereign State with an association with our country.

Now, that has to be done through agreement because we have to make that decision as well as the Puerto Ricans. That would have to be an agreement between us, and both sides would have to be willing partners to that agreement.

Additionally, it would implement comprehensive, nonpartisan public-education campaigns to help voters understand the implications of each option long before any ballots are cast.

The gentlewoman from New York has made it an essential part of her argument that the people of Puerto Rico have to know what they are voting on and what the consequences of that vote will be. Ms. OCASIO-CORTEZ has made that same point correctly.

This bipartisan bill also includes a variety of oversight measures to ensure that the election is secure, transparent, and fair.

I have long-believed that Puerto Ricans deserve the right to determine their political destiny. This is not a new concept for me. I don't think it is a new concept for any of us in this Congress. We believe in self-determination of peoples. We believe that dictators cannot impose upon people a govern-

ment they do not choose. That is bedrock belief for us. That is what this bill is about.

A group of House Members and senior Puerto Rican officials—I am honored that my former colleague and my dear friend is on the floor with us today, Pedro Pierluisi. The Governor has been selected by the people of Puerto Rico.

I am honored to be the friend of and ally of the gentlewoman from Puerto Rico who is the Resident Commissioner from Puerto Rico, who has worked tirelessly with NYDIA VELÁZQUEZ, with the rest of us, in ensuring that the people of Puerto Rico have an honest, fair choice available to them to affect their status, and to reach the long-sought consensus on a path forward for self-determination.

Madam Speaker, I thank Chairman GRIJALVA. This has been a long and torturous path because the disagreements about how we get to where we want to get are so difficult. Chairman GRIJALVA deserves great praise from all of us for his patience, for his knowledge, for his wisdom, for his role that he played in trying to bring this to a head. He has done it, it is here on this floor, and he is responsible for that.

Madam Speaker, I thank the members of the Natural Resources Committee on both sides of the aisle, and I thank the staff for the work that they have done—tireless hours and difficult discussions, debates, and so much disharmony from all those, both the diaspora and those in Puerto Rico—strong feelings that had to be brought to bear to reach this consensus.

Madam Speaker, I thank Chairwoman NYDIA VELÁZQUEZ; Representative DARREN SOTO, who is on the floor and perhaps is going to speak after me; Representative ALEXANDRIA OCASIO-CORTEZ; the Puerto Rican Resident Commissioner that I have spoken of, JENNIFFER GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN; and you, Governor.

Madam Speaker, the Governor and I have had the opportunity to work together when you were a Member of this House. We passed a bill that this House passed saying that the Puerto Rican people ought to have a choice, so this is not new. The previous gentleman wasn't here in Congress then—I don't know that, but I don't think he was. This is not new. This has not been done haphazardly. This has been done carefully with difficult efforts made by all parties.

All of the people that I mentioned, I thank for their efforts to reach this historic consensus and action on behalf of the people of Puerto Rico. We are all in agreement that the decision must belong to the people of Puerto Rico alone. Their destiny ought to be up to them.

The Puerto Rican Status Act, of which we will consider in just a few minutes, will give them that choice. They will have that choice only if we vote “yes.” If we do not vote “yes” today, I fear we may not vote “yes” for a very long time. The people of Puerto

Rico would be held in a status that I believe the majority of them do not want to be in.

Madam Speaker, I, therefore, ask all of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to represent the values of America in this vote. The values that say to us that people have the inherent right to self-determination, not to have it imposed upon them by force or by dictate of the Congress of the United States, but to choose a status of their choosing, of their desire, of their vision. Vote for this status bill, it represents the best of American values. We have a moral responsibility to do so.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I thank the distinguished gentleman, the leader of the Democratic Party, for his remarks. I agree with many things that he said. I think all of us would agree with many of the things that he stated. I was with him right up there until the part about using D.C. statehood as a metaphor with Puerto Rican statehood. If the gentleman wanted to talk about the residents of D.C., we can talk about taking those residential neighborhoods and commercial neighborhoods in D.C. and putting them back with the State of Maryland if that is an issue. D.C. statehood is totally different from Puerto Rican statehood, and it shouldn't even be brought into this discussion.

The gentleman talked about the inherent right to self-determination. He said it is something that shouldn't be dictated by the Congress of the U.S. to the people of Puerto Rico. He said the decision belongs to the people of Puerto Rico. Their destiny belongs to them. I think we would all agree with that in principle, but that is not what this bill says.

Section 102 talking about the independence option. I am reading directly from the bill: “The constitutional convention under section 101 shall formulate and draft a constitution for Puerto Rico that guarantees the protection of fundamental human rights . . .”

We all agree that should happen, but if they are an independent nation, what right do we have to tell them that? It says it shall include: “Due process and equal protection under the law; freedom of speech, press, assembly, association, and religion; the rights of the accused; any other economic, social, and cultural rights as the constitutional convention may deem appropriate and necessary; and provisions to ensure that no individual born in the nation of Puerto Rico shall be stateless at birth.”

I don't disagree with that, but if they vote for independence, what right do we have to dictate to them how they write their constitution and what is included in it?

The other option of free association, section 202 of the bill: “The constitutional convention under section 201 shall formulate and draft a constitution for Puerto Rico that guarantees



the protection of fundamental human rights . . . ”

Again, if they have the sovereignty under a free association, what right does Congress have to dictate what their constitution will say? The leader's words that their destiny shouldn't be dictated by the U.S. Congress. Their destiny belongs to them. Yet, this bill tells them what they shall do if they vote for either of those options.

Madam Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentlewoman from Puerto Rico (Miss GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN).

□ 1145

Miss GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN. Madam Speaker, today is a truly historic day for Puerto Rico. Ironically, it is also a perfect example of the island's colonial reality.

I am Puerto Rico's only voice in Congress. I represent 3.2 million American citizens living back home, more constituents than anyone in this Chamber. Yet, while we consider a bill I helped write, a bill that will directly impact the life of every citizen I represent, I still must rely and depend on everybody here because I cannot vote on the floor. This is the best example of why this bill is so important for Puerto Rico.

Today, Congress takes a step toward finally assuming its responsibility under Article IV, Section 3, Clause 2 of our Constitution to provide the people of Puerto Rico with an opportunity, a federally binding choice to democratically decide our future among three nonterritorial, constitutionally viable options: statehood, independence, and independence in association with the United States.

For the first time in history, we are considering legislation that would authorize a self-executing plebiscite on the island. With the adoption of this bill, this Chamber is also recognizing and making clear that Puerto Rico's century-old territorial status is the problem and cannot be part of the solution.

The territorial condition constrains the island's ability to prosper and has relegated the island to an indefinite second-class status when compared to the 50 States.

This is the main reason behind social, economic, and physical challenges we have faced, forcing a mass exodus of millions of Puerto Ricans to the mainland in search of that equality.

Congress has perpetuated by its inaction this dysfunctional political-economic condition, one that at its core is, as President Ronald Reagan once characterized it, “historically unnatural.”

Because we are a territory, the people of Puerto Rico lack full voting representation in the House and Senate and cannot vote for the President, who sends our sons and daughters to war.

Because we are a territory, the Federal Government can, and often does, treat us unequally under Federal laws and programs.

Because we are a territory, we are treated as second-class citizens.

Because we are a territory, I am here today discussing a bill related to one of our most critical issues, yet I cannot vote on this bill. This is the reason this discussion is so important.

I support statehood for the island, and our people have voted not once, not twice, but three times already supporting statehood.

In response, I introduced H.R. 1522, which, following the most recent precedents of Alaska and Hawaii, would have established a process to admit the island as a State of the Union in a simple yes or no vote. However, given the political realities in this Congress, and in the interest of advancing the status issue, I led negotiations on this bill before us.

This bill would make an offer to the people of Puerto Rico to choose. I prefer statehood, but this bill would allow the people to choose between statehood, independence, or independence in association with the United States, and spell out the consequences of each option.

Of course, this bill is not perfect, but at least it will advance the issue.

Today, I remember the late Congressman Don Young of Alaska, who understood better than anyone else the inequities that come with being a territory and always championed statehood for Puerto Rico.

Madam Speaker, never has a U.S. territory had to wait longer than Puerto Rico to become an independent nation or to become a State, and we have voted three times for that. We have more than earned the right to do so.

Today, as the sole representative of the people of the island, I urge my colleagues to vote for this bill, H.R. 8393, and allow us to finally put an end to our shameful territorial status.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Madam Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SOTO), someone who, with other colleagues, worked through this difficult process and produced the consensus today.

Mr. SOTO. Madam Speaker, it is time to set our people free. After 124 years, it is past time for Americans in Puerto Rico to decide their own form of government.

The Puerto Rico Status Act will finally allow Puerto Ricans to throw off their colonial bonds, finally end their territorial status and choose for themselves: statehood, independence, and sovereignty with free association. What a historic day today is in the U.S. House of Representatives.

With the option of statehood, which is my preference, it is simple. Puerto Rico would become the 51st State in our Nation, with all the representation rights of our States.

With independence, they would become an independent nation, a sovereign free to decide their own future.

With sovereignty with free association, they would be an independent nation and would have the right to enter

into a compact, a contract between the United States and Puerto Rico that would provide for citizenship for a limited time, foreign policy agreements, among other matters.

The history of this bill this term is really important to discuss. We had two hearings that lasted a day each. We had bipartisan negotiations with the great leader on the Republican side, JENNIFFER GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN, the very voice of the island of Puerto Rico, along with my colleagues NYDIA VELÁZQUEZ, ALEXANDRIA OCASIO-CORTEZ, our great chairman here, and, of course, our leader.

It is bipartisan. Just to make sure, we had another nearly daylong hearing, meeting with stakeholders on the island after the draft was released.

Then, of course, we had a markup. That lasted all day. In fact, I can't think of a single bill that we have gotten out of the Natural Resources Committee that we spent more time on this term than this bill.

Of course, we see a long history of discrimination against territories, or excuses for why territories shouldn't become States.

With Texas, they said, “Could a nation become a State?” But they got in.

With New Mexico, they talked about a majority Hispanic native State. It took them nearly 70 years. They got in.

In Utah, there was religious discrimination. In Hawaii, it was a nation and a predominantly native island—Alaska, as well.

One by one, we admitted these territories as States based upon their desire to join the Union.

At this moment, I can't help but well up with emotion. I think about the brave, Borinqueneers, who fought in World War I, World War II, Korea. Puerto Ricans serve in our armed services to this day in greater numbers, in many instances, than States. Many died fighting for a country that organized them into segregated units, sent them there on orders of a Commander in Chief for whom they could not vote under our laws. Yet, as Puerto Ricans, as Americans, they did so proudly, sacrificing their lives for our freedom.

I think about my trips to Iraq and Afghanistan during the global war on terror. I can never forget traveling through the vast desert of Kuwait and, upon landing at an isolated base, there was the Puerto Rican flag flying in the middle of the desert. You have to wonder, what were they doing there? It is out of love of this country that they were there.

I was similarly welcomed by a Puerto Rican medical unit proudly serving in Afghanistan under constant threat of danger.

I think about those families I met after Hurricane Maria and the devastation caused there, the most deadly disaster in modern history. That was a watershed moment for so many of us. It just showed how fragile the rights of those on the island were, recovering from Puerto Rico's worst disaster, with Hurricane Maria.

I also think of my bisabuela, Altagracia Casanova. Born just after the turn of the 20th century, I met her for the first time when she was in her late eighties during my first trip to the island. I was only 3 years old. We developed a close relationship, and she ultimately lived to 96 years old.

Her life spanned nearly a century. All the while, she lived in a colonial territory as a second-class citizen in the greatest democracy in the world. What a tragedy. What an irony.

I think about my abuela, Sara Casanova, who would come to the mainland every summer to spend time with us, teach us the language and history, enjoy our native food and music, and familiarize us with our family's native culture.

She died right before my first successful primary to the Florida House of Representatives back in 2007. But before she passed, even with a fading memory, she read about the campaign in *La Prensa* and cried. She understood it was a historic moment for our family, a passing of the torch to the next generation.

I carry that torch into this Chamber, and I ask you all to support freedom for our family back on the island, just like we expect for every other American.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. SMUCKER).

Mr. SMUCKER. Madam Speaker, I am especially grateful to the ranking member for allowing me 2 minutes because he knows I am rising in support of this bill.

I understand and completely agree with my friend, Mr. WESTERMAN, who is a dear friend and who does a wonderful job as ranking member on this committee. I understand his frustration with this process because this did come up quickly. There are a lot of unanswered questions about what this will mean, depending on what the Puerto Rican people will choose.

I agree with him when he said that America is a beacon of hope to the world, and it is a light to the world. I think that makes the case for why we should allow the Puerto Rican people to make their choice about their own future.

I have heard concerns on our side about economic issues, taking on debt. I think this bill will specifically address that. Puerto Rico, if it chooses to be a State, would keep the debt. I would argue the opposite. Puerto Rico has been a territory since 1898, with 3.2 million American citizens. We have not provided them every tool we possibly can to ensure they can be prosperous.

I have visited Puerto Rico. I have a large community in my district from Puerto Rico, who have family. I visited after the hurricane. I was grateful for the support that we were able to provide.

But let's give every tool that we possibly can, including full citizenship in the United States of America, if that is

what they choose, to be prosperous, to contribute to the American economy.

I think we can look at this as a net positive. It will be a net positive if, indeed, Puerto Rico chooses to become the 51st State.

Again, I am grateful for the work of the ranking member and the committee on this. It is not taken lightly to disagree with him on a particular issue. There will be other steps in this process.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Madam Speaker, I yield an additional 30 seconds to the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

Mr. SMUCKER. There will be other steps in this process during which I hope some of those real, legitimate questions can be answered.

We should allow the Puerto Rican people to make their choice about their future. I know, certainly, the Puerto Rican population, who have families back in the community, this is what they are looking for. I am proud to stand with them and their family members if they have the opportunity to freely determine the future of their beloved island.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Madam Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. OCASIO-CORTEZ), one of the principals that worked on this consensus.

Ms. OCASIO-CORTEZ. Madam Speaker, before I begin today, I would like to express and begin my remarks by expressing solidarity with other U.S. colonies, colonized people, indigenous communities, and descendants of the enslaved.

Today represents a historic moment. While Puerto Rico is not the United States' only colony, it is its oldest. Today, for the first time in our Nation's history, the United States will acknowledge its role as a colonizing force and Puerto Rico's status as an extended colony.

The Puerto Rico Status Act begins a process for Boricuas to decide their own future.

In this bill, we have made historic and unprecedented gains. Never before have terms for independence and free association been so clearly defined, including ramifications for citizenship.

This bill excludes the current unsustainable colonial status. It clarifies that U.S. birthright citizenship and transmission of citizenship remain the same in any event of status selection.

□ 1200

It provides 10 years of compensatory finance in the event of free association, and it also includes an agreement to international election observers over the course of a plebiscite.

This bill has also achieved historic and unprecedented multiparty agreement on the island, including representatives from the Independence, Statehood, and Movimiento Victoria Parties. These gains are critically im-

portant to codify in precedent here in this House.

I also want to acknowledge, rightfully, some of the criticisms of what is not in this bill. It is not perfect. But we have fought tirelessly to expand the transparency where previously there was less, and there is still more to go. It does not address reparations. It does not address the issues of Act 20, PROMESA, and LUMA, but I am confident that in solidarity with movements on the island, we will solve these issues and achieve those victories, as well.

I also want to note that decolonization is more than a vote. It doesn't happen just with a vote. It is a social, political, cultural, economic, and psychological process that extends far beyond the floor of this House. That being said, the gains that are made here are a watershed moment.

I thank, first and foremost, my incredible mentor, Representative NYDIA VELÁZQUEZ, who has fought for the people of Puerto Rico for her entire career and her entire life.

I thank our other colleagues: Chairman GRIJALVA for elevating this issue, Leader HOYER for making this a priority, as well as Resident Commissioner GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN.

I also thank grassroots advocacy organizations as well as our partners in the Independence, Free Association, and Statehood Parties. These gains are incredibly important, and they are a waypoint and a stepping stone for the future of our island. I think it sends a very strong message to all. For there to be any vote, prior to any vote, we hope that the energy of people both in the diaspora and on the island are here.

Lastly, but certainly not least, as we ring out a refrain that is said among people across the world and Puerto Ricans across the world: "Yo sí soy boricua, pa'que tu lo sepas," "I am Puerto Rican, so you know."

Mr. WESTERMAN. Madam Speaker, may I inquire as to how much time is remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Arkansas has 12 minutes remaining.

The gentleman from Arizona has 6½ minutes remaining.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

If there is one thing that I think has come out in this discussion is that there are problems with this bill. It is not a "perfect piece of legislation." It needs work done on it.

But we have to look at what the bill says. The way this bill is written, if it were to pass today, if it passes out of this House and it went through the process in the Senate, signed by the President, then we have abrogated all of our responsibilities and authority, because it doesn't come back to Congress for any kind of approval.

So both sides have agreed, in a bipartisan manner, that this bill has problems, yet we are voting on it today to

say, with problems, that is okay; we are just going to go ahead and move it through the process, even though we have all recognized that there are problems with the bill.

Madam Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. McCLINTOCK).

Mr. McCLINTOCK. Madam Speaker, we have heard a lot about self-determination today, but let's put that to the smell test.

The options that the Democrats are presenting to the Puerto Rican people don't include the most obvious choice, to remain as a commonwealth. So if you prefer the status quo, you are completely out of luck. The Democrats have already decided you are not allowed to vote for that. That is not self-determination. That is rigging an election.

Now, if none of the three options the Democrats have chosen for you gets 50 percent, then there is a runoff, even if the option dropped was the clear second choice of voters. And a narrow, transient majority seems to be most likely, since the November 2020 plebiscite scored just 52.5 percent in favor of statehood, 47.5 percent opposed, with just 53 percent turning out to vote. Completely ignored is the right of all the American people to discuss and decide so momentous and irreversible a question as this.

Statehood would mean that in the next reapportionment, other States will lose a total of four seats in the House of Representatives in order to accommodate the Puerto Rican delegation.

Only about 20 percent of the population is fluent in English, which means that we would be admitting a State whose vast majority is isolated from the national political debate that is central to our democracy.

Nor will statehood solve Puerto Rico's economic problems. Residents would now have to pay all Federal income taxes from which they are currently exempt. The GAO estimates that would cost Puerto Rico 70 percent of its existing manufacturing base. There is not even a CBO estimate of the cost to American taxpayers of admitting a chronically mismanaged and utterly bankrupt State government.

The economy of Puerto Rico is expected to underperform the national economy, which is itself a disaster. For American taxpayers, it would mean a new State that has the lowest per capita income in the country and the largest per capita debt. Its labor participation rate is 40 percent, compared to 62 percent nationally. Forty-three percent of the population lives below the poverty line. Its academic performance would be the worst in the Nation.

So how does it benefit America to admit a State that would be the most indebted, uneducated, poorest, and least employed State in the Nation?

We don't get to consider that question, because under this bill, Congress gets no further say in the matter once

Puerto Rico has voted. That makes it a blanket abrogation of the responsibility of Congress to make these decisions in the best interest of all of the people of the United States.

Whichever of the three options is chosen would be automatically enacted without any further debate or decision by Congress. It hands the constitutional authority reserved for the welfare of the entire Nation to the hands of what would be a narrow and transient majority in Puerto Rico.

The only debate in Congress on Puerto Rican statehood is the debate that we are having right now, when the Nation is oblivious to the legislation or its implications. Our constituents will awaken across the country to the realization of a fait accompli that was quickly rushed through the very last days of session with no opportunity for national debate on the implications of making such a profound and permanent change in the fabric of our Nation. This is as cynical as it gets.

If the motion to recommit is adopted, I will introduce an amendment that will require the question to be returned to the House for a full national debate on such a momentous issue and require a two-thirds vote to assure a broad, bipartisan consensus.

Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to insert the text of the amendment in the RECORD immediately prior to the vote on the motion to recommit.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Madam Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. CASTOR).

Ms. CASTOR of Florida. Madam Speaker, the people of Puerto Rico deserve to live in dignity with the freedom to determine their future. That is why I rise in support of the Puerto Rico Status Act.

The act simply provides Puerto Ricans the opportunity to determine their future and choose whether statehood, independence, or sovereignty and free association makes the most sense for them.

Colleagues, I hope we can all agree that we all value basic human rights, and that means, like every American citizen, our Puerto Rican neighbors deserve true representation, equal rights, and everything that flows from that.

After Hurricane Maria devastated the island in 2017, boricuas in the Tampa Bay area came together to advocate for resources to rebuild the island. The disparate treatment became so plain at that time, but it has existed for decades, even as Puerto Ricans have given their life in service of America's freedom.

So it is time that the territorial status of Puerto Rico be reexamined. It is unsustainable and cannot continue. Puerto Ricans deserve the opportunity to have their say.

I thank Representatives VELÁZQUEZ, SOTO, OCASIO-CORTEZ, GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN,

Leader HOYER, and Chair GRIJALVA for crafting this landmark legislation for self-determination per the democratic values that we hold dear.

Vote for self-determination and freedom and democracy for everyone. I urge you to adopt this bill.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Our neighbors in Puerto Rico are American citizens. They are afforded the protections under the Constitution of the United States. I am from Arkansas. Arkansas was a territory at one time. There is a process for becoming a State.

The American citizens in Puerto Rico deserve the respect to have a process that has actually been thought out, that has been debated, and that gives them an opportunity to enter statehood in a way that is more common to the way other States have entered. This bill is not that. This bill has serious problems with it.

We are right here at the end of Congress. To me, this just looks like a political ploy as we are waiting to pass a massive spending bill before we go home for Christmas and start the new Congress.

Madam Speaker, in closing, it is obvious there is bipartisan support for Puerto Rican self-determination. That is not the issue. The issue is the process, and this is a bad process.

If this is so important to the majority, then I ask: Why today? Why today?

Less than 20 days before this Congress ends and Democrats transition to the minority, why bring this bill today?

Was there not time in the past 4 years to have hearings on this bill, to have other committees look at this bill?

But yesterday, we get notice of an emergency Rules Committee meeting to consider this bill that all of a sudden is so important, but it wasn't important, certainly not in this Congress. We didn't have a hearing on this bill. We had a markup, a markup without a hearing.

The committee spent more time talking about big cats. We had hearings on big cats, then we talked about Puerto Rican status. There are 10,000 big cats in the United States, and there are over 3 million Puerto Rican citizens.

That is why we are not supporting this bill today, and that is why it is disingenuous to bring it to the House less than 20 days before the end of this Congress when both sides have agreed that there are problems with the bill, problems that need to be worked out, but there is no recourse in this bill for Congress to have a second look at it.

We can't control the Senate, but I doubt very seriously the Senate is going to be taking up this bill. So that leads me to conclude that what we are doing here at the end of December, discussing Puerto Rican status, is simply just a political ploy on the backs of the

Puerto Rican citizens of the United States.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote “no,” and I yield back the balance of my time.

□ 1215

Mr. GRIJALVA. Madam Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

This has been a typical debate on Puerto Rico because the question of status and the question of decolonizing our relationship with the people of the island is a question that causes spirited debate. That is okay, but spirited debate with misinformation and hastily drawn conclusions is not the way to debate. We will leave that for another day.

The important point today is that this did not get parachuted at the last minute. This has been a difficult process for all involved, and, I might add, a bipartisan process, to bring one final resolution regardless of where the clock is in terms of this session. This is the time that this was completed.

Madam Speaker, I am proud of this, and I am urging a “yes” vote on the legislation.

There are two fundamental differences between ourselves and the minority on this. The intent of the bill is simple: that there be three options, all requiring a deliberate and informed decision by the people of the island.

The current status is not one of those three options. Why? Because the intent of this legislation is to allow the Puerto Rican people not to be colonized and be a colony. That is the decolonization part of the legislation.

The other part, although it has been the habit lately of people wanting not only to predict outcomes of elections but to guarantee outcomes of elections, contrary to that philosophy, this directs that the people of Puerto Rico make the decision and respect that decision.

Our identity as a Nation is built on the values that we are all here to support and respect. It is built on the rule of law. The people of Puerto Rico, as citizens of this Nation, must be extended the respect and the consideration that, since 1898, we have been the overseer of a colony in this country. We must extend them the opportunity to choose their path forward.

That is all it is. It is democratic; it is fair; and it is overdue.

Madam Speaker, I thank all the Members who worked on this—in particular, Representatives VELÁZQUEZ, SOTO, GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN, and OCASIO-CORTEZ—for the difficult periods and times they went through in this process, and obviously Majority Leader HOYER for his insistence, his prodding, and, on occasion, his calmness to get us to this point.

I thank the staff on our committee: chief counsel, Luis Urbina; deputy chief counsel, Margarita Varela; policy aide, Ivan Robles; staff director, David Watkins; and director of our Office of Insular Affairs, Brian Modeste.

I also thank each and every one on Leader HOYER's staff: Trent Bauserman and Chris Bowman; also Renata Becabarragan on Ms. VELÁZQUEZ's staff; Gabriella Boffelli on Miss GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN's staff; and Andrea Valdes on Mr. SOTO's staff for their hard work and dedication to getting us to this point today. Sometimes that kind of work is underappreciated. I acknowledge their work and thank them.

Madam Speaker, I urge a “yes” vote, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 8393—Puerto Rico Status Act, to provide a plebiscite to be held on November 5th, 2023, to resolve Puerto Rico's political status.

Throughout my decades of service in Congress, I have been an ardent and consistent supporter of the Puerto Rican peoples' right to self-determination.

I have stood alongside our Puerto Rican brothers and sisters on many legislative efforts that would empower them to choose the governance status of their preference, as is their right, both as American citizens and in accordance with their basic human rights.

The population of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico is 3.19 million.

Puerto Ricans are the largest group of U.S. citizens with Hispanic heritage, and yet, are treated with only 2nd-class citizenship.

In fact, Puerto Ricans have been the largest body of U.S. citizens which do not enjoy the privileges usually accorded to citizenship, including voting representation in Congress and the right to vote in Presidential elections.

It is a widely held belief in Puerto Rico that the residents of the Commonwealth should be empowered to decide their own political status. The Commonwealth's status is an internal matter among the people of Puerto Rico.

Puerto Rico has hosted 6 referendums on the topic of statehood, with the most recent being in November 2020. The results of that referendum were that 52.5 percent of the electorate voted for statehood.

It is obvious that the people of Puerto Rico want to change the way they are represented in their own governance and that of the United States Government.

During the referendum in 2012, 54 percent of voters agreed that they did not want to maintain their current method of governance.

The majority of those that did not want to maintain the status quo chose statehood as the alternative that they preferred.

While many of these referendums have been held and have told us what the people of Puerto Rico think, nothing has materialized as a result.

This is why it is essential that Congress allow a plebiscite to Puerto Rico to resolve its political status.

Voters in Puerto Rico should be provided with the opportunity to choose independence, sovereignty in free association with the United States, or statehood.

It is imperative that this voting process be fair and free of any disinformation, propaganda, or wrongdoing.

All voters should be provided with voting materials in both English and Spanish, and all voting campaigns should be dedicated to providing voters with educational materials related to the plebiscites and potential outcomes.

The Puerto Rico State Elections Commission shall ensure that any educational campaigns are non-partisan in nature and provide voters with accurate information that allow them to vote according to their best interests.

I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 8393—Puerto Rico Status Act, so that the Commonwealth can decide what is best for its people.

All Americans deserve representation, and this bill provides Puerto Ricans the right to make that decision for themselves.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 1519, the previous question is ordered on the bill, as amended.

The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

#### MOTION TO RECOMMIT

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Madam Speaker, I have a motion to recommit at the desk.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the motion to recommit.

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. McClintock of California moves to recommit the bill H.R. 8393 to the Committee on Natural Resources.

The material previously referred to by Mr. MCCLINTOCK is as follows:

After section 11, insert the following:

#### SEC. 12. CONGRESSIONAL RATIFICATION REQUIRED.

The result of a plebiscite under section 4 may not be certified before the date on which the House of Representatives and the Senate approve, by a two-thirds majority vote, the result of the plebiscite.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XIX, the previous question is ordered on the motion to recommit.

The question is on the motion to recommit.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the yeas appeared to have it.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 9 of rule XX, this 15-minute vote on the motion to recommit will be followed by 5-minute votes on passage of H.R. 8393, if ordered, and passage of H.R. 1948.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 209, nays 217, not voting 4, as follows:

[Roll No. 528]

YEAS—209

Aderholt	Bilirakis	Carl
Allen	Bishop (NC)	Carter (GA)
Amodei	Boebert	Carter (TX)
Armstrong	Bost	Cawthorn
Arrington	Brady	Chabot
Babin	Brooks	Cline
Bacon	Buchanan	Cloud
Baird	Buck	Clyde
Balderson	Bucshon	Cole
Banks	Budd	Comer
Barr	Burchett	Conway
Bentz	Burgess	Crawford
Bergman	Calvert	Crenshaw
Bice (OK)	Cammack	Curtis
Biggs	Carey	Davidson

Davis, Rodney	Huizenga	Pence	Maloney,	Peters	Soto	Newman (Correa)	Quigley	Stevens (Craig)
DesJarlais	Issa	Perry	Carolyn B.	Phillips	Spanberger	Norcross	(Schneider)	Stewart (Owens)
Diaz-Balart	Jackson	Pfluger	Maloney, Sean	Pingree	Speier	(Pallone)	Rice (SC) (Weber)	Strickland
Donalds	Jacobs (NY)	Posey	Manning	Pocan	Stansbury	O'Halleran	(TX))	(Correa)
Duncan	Johnson (LA)	Reschenthaler	Matsui	Porter	Stanton	(Pappas)	Rush (Beyer)	Suozzi (Correa)
Dunn	Johnson (OH)	Rice (SC)	McBath	Pressley	Stevens	Omar (Beyer)	Sewell	Tiffany
Ellzey	Johnson (SD)	Rodgers (WA)	McCollum	Price (NC)	Strickland	Palazzo	(Schneider)	(Fitzgerald)
Emmer	Jordan	Rogers (AL)	McGovern	Quigley	Suoizzi	(Fleischmann)	Sherrill (Beyer)	Titus (Pallone)
Estes	Joyce (OH)	Rogers (KY)	McNerney	Raskin	Swalwell	Pascrell	Simpson	Trahan (Lynch)
Fallon	Joyce (PA)	Rose	Meeks	Rice (NY)	Takano	(Pallone)	(Fulcher)	Welch (Pallone)
Feenstra	Katko	Rosendale	Meng	Ross	Thompson (CA)	Phillips (Craig)	Sires (Pallone)	Wilson (FL)
Ferguson	Keller	Rouzer	Mfume	Roybal-Allard	Thompson (MS)	Pingree (Beyer)	Spartz	(Evans)
Finstad	Kelly (PA)	Roy	Moore (WI)	Ruiz	Titus	Porter (Beyer)	(Harshbarger)	Wilson (SC)
Fischbach	Kim (CA)	Rutherford	Morelle	Ruppersberger	Tlaib	Pressley	Speier (Garcia)	(Timmons)
Fitzgerald	Kinzinger	Salazar	Moulton	Rush	Tonko	(Neguse)	(TX))	
Fitzpatrick	Kustoff	Scalise	Mrvan	Ryan (NY)	Torres (CA)			
Fleischmann	LaHood	Schweikert	Murphy (FL)	Ryan (OH)	Torres (NY)			
Flood	LaMalfa	Scott, Austin	Nadler	Sánchez	Trahan			
Flores	Lamborn	Sempolinski	Napolitano	Sarbanes	Trone			
Fox	Latta	Sessions	Neal	Scanlon	Underwood			
Franklin, C.	LaTurner	Simpson	Neguse	Schakowsky	Vargas			
	Scott	Smith (MO)	Newman	Schiff	Veasey			
Fulcher	Letlow	Smith (NE)	Norcross	Schneider	Velazquez			
Gaetz	Long	Smith (NJ)	O'Halleran	Schrader	Wasserman			
Gallagher	Loudermilk	Smucker	Ocasio-Cortez	Schrier	Schultz			
Garbarino	Lucas	Spartz	Omar	Scott (VA)	Waters			
Garcia (CA)	Luetkemeyer	Staubert	Pallone	Scott, David	Watson Coleman			
Gibbs	Mace	Steel	Panetta	Sewell	Welch			
Gimenez	Malliotakis	Pappas	Sherman	Sherman	Wild			
Gohmert	Mann	Pascrell	Sherrill	Sires	Williams (GA)			
Gonzales, Tony	Massie	Payne	Sires	Slotkin	Wilson (FL)			
Gonzalez (OH)	Mast	Peltola	Smith (WA)	Yarmuth				
Good (VA)	McCarthy	Taylor						
Gooden (TX)	McCauley	Tenney						
Gosar	McClain	Thompson (PA)						
Granger	McClintock	Tiffany						
Graves (LA)	McHenry	Timmons						
Graves (MO)	Meijer	Turner						
Green (TN)	Meuser	Upton						
Greene (GA)	Miller (IL)	Valadao						
Griffith	Miller (WV)	Van Drew						
Grothman	Miller-Meeks	Van Duyn						
Guest	Moolenaar	Wagner						
Guthrie	Mooney	Walberg						
Harris	Moore (AL)	Waltz						
Harshbarger	Moore (UT)	Weber (TX)						
Hartzler	Mullin	Webster (FL)						
Hern	Murphy (NC)	Wenstrup						
Herrell	Nehls	Westerman						
Herrera Beutler	Newhouse	Williams (TX)						
Hice (GA)	Norman	Wilson (SC)						
Higgins (LA)	Overholte	Wittman						
Hill	Owens	Womack						
Hollingsworth	Palazzo	Yakym						
Hudson	Palmer	Zeldin						

## NAYS—217

Adams	Connolly
Aguilar	Cooper
Allred	Correa
Auchincloss	Costa
Axne	Courtney
Barragán	Craig
Beatty	Crow
Bera	Cuellar
Beyer	Davidson (KS)
Bishop (GA)	Davis, Danny K.
Blumenauer	Dean
Blunt Rochester	DeFazio
Bonamici	DeGette
Bourdeaux	DeLauro
Bowman	DelBene
Boyle, Brendan	Demings
F.	DeSaulnier
Brown (MD)	Dingell
Brown (OH)	Doggett
Brownley	Doyle, Michael
Bush	F.
Bustos	Escobar
Butterfield	Eshoo
Carbajal	Españat
Cárdenas	Evans
Carson	Fletcher
Carter (LA)	Foster
Cartwright	Frankel, Lois
Case	Gallego
Casten	Garamendi
Castor (FL)	Garcia (IL)
Castro (TX)	Garcia (TX)
Cheney	Golden
Cherfilus-	Gomez
McCormick	Gonzalez,
Chu	Vicente
Cicilline	Gottheimer
Clark (MA)	Green, Al (TX)
Clarke (NY)	Grijalva
Cleaver	Harder (CA)
Clyburn	Hayes
Cohen	Higgins (NY)

Himes
Horsford
Houlahan
Hoyer
Huffman
Jackson Lee
Jacobs (CA)
Jayapal
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (TX)
Jones
Kahele
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Khanna
Kildee
Kilmer
Kim (NJ)
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Krishnamoorthi
Kuster
Lamb
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lawson (FL)
Lee (CA)
Lee (NV)
Leger Fernandez
Levin (CA)
Levin (MI)
Lieu
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Luria
Lynch
Malinowski

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Messrs. CLEAVER, COURTNEY, Ms. STANSBURY, Messrs. PAYNE, BISHOP of Georgia, PANETTA, Ms. CRAIG, Messrs. CLYBURN, VEASEY, BOWMAN, Mses. CLARK of Massachusetts, SEWELL, DeBENE, Mrs. BUSTOS, Messrs. QUIGLEY, HIMES, Mrs. PELTOLA, Mses. TLAIB, and JACKSON LEE changed their vote from “yea” to “nay”.

Messrs. MULLIN, CLINE, JOHNSON of Ohio, FITZGERALD, BUCSHON, CRENSHAW, Ms. SALAZAR, Messrs. LAMALFA, STEUBE, and Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS changed their vote from “nay” to “yea”.

So the motion to recommit was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

## MEMBERS RECORDED PURSUANT TO HOUSE

## RESOLUTION 8, 117TH CONGRESS

Auchincloss	DesJarlais	Johnson (TX)
(Beyer)	(Fleischmann)	(Pallone)
Axne (Pappas)	Dingell (Pappas)	Kelly (IL)
Beatty (Neguse)	Doyle, Michael	(Horsford)
Bishop (NC)	F. (Evans)	Khanna (Pappas)
(Hice (GA))	Duncan	Kim (NJ)
Boebert	(Williams	(Pallone)
(Donalds)	(TX))	Kirkpatrick
Brooks (Moore	Dunn (Salazar)	(Pallone)
(AL))	Escobar (Garcia	Krishnamoorthi
Brown (MD)	(TX))	(Pappas)
(Evans)	Españat	LaHood (Kustoff)
Bustos	(Correa)	Larson (CT)
(Schneider)	Ferguson	(Pappas)
Butterfield	(Gonzales,	Lawrence
(Beyer)	Tony (TX))	(Garcia (TX))
Carter (LA)	Gaetz (Donalds)	Lawson (FL)
(Horsford)	Gallego (Beyer)	(Evans)
Cawthorn	Gibbs (Smucker)	Letlow (Moore
(Donalds)	Gosar (Weber	(UT))
Cherfilus-	(TX))	Levin (CA)
McCormick	Hartzler (Weber	(Huffman)
(Brown (OH))	(TX))	Long
Cicilline	Herrera Beutler	(Fleischmann)
(Jayapal)	(Valadao)	Malliotakis
Cuellar (Correa)	Issa (Calvert)	(Armstrong)
DeFazio	Jackson (Van	Maloney, Sean P.
(Pallone)	Duyn)	(Beyer)
DelBene	Jacobs (NY)	Meeks (Horsford)
(Schneider)	(Sempolinski)	Moulton (Trone)

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. OCASIO-CORTEZ). The question is on the passage of the bill.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Ms. CONWAY. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 233, nays 191, not voting 6, as follows:

[Roll No. 529]

## YEAS—233

Adams	Doyle, Michael	Levin (CA)
Aguilar	F.	Levin (MI)
Allred	Escobar	Lieu
Auchincloss	Eshoo	Lofgren
Axne	Españat	Lowenthal
Bacon	Evans	Luria
Barragán	Fitzpatrick	Lynch
Beatty	Fletcher	Malinowski
Bera	Flores	Maloney,
Beyer	Foster	Carolyn B.
Bishop (GA)	Frankel, Lois	Maloney, Sean
Blumenauer	Gallego	Manning
Blunt Rochester	Garamendi	Matsui
Bonamici	Garbarino	McBath
Bourdeaux	Garcia (IL)	McCollum
Bowman	Garcia (TX)	McGovern
Boyle, Brendan	Golden	McNerney
F.	Gomez	Meeks
Brown (MD)	Gonzalez (OH)	Meng
Brown (OH)	Gonzalez,	Mfume
Brownley	Vicente	Moore (WI)
Bush	Gottheimer	Morelle
Bustos	Green, Al (TX)	Moulton
Butterfield	Grijalva	Mrvan
Carbajal	Harder (CA)	Murphy (FL)
Cárdenas	Hayes	Nadler
Carson	Herrera Beutler	Napolitano
Carter (LA)	Higgins (NY)	Neal
Cartwright	Himes	Neguse
Casten	Horsford	Newhouse
Castor (FL)	Houlahan	Newman
Castro (TX)	Hoyer	Norcross
Cheney	Huffman	O'Halleran
Cherfilus-	Huizenga	Ocasio-Cortez
McCormick	Jackson Lee	Omar
Chu	Jacobs (CA)	Pallone
Cicilline	Jayapal	Panetta
Clark (MA)	Jeffries	Pappas
Clarke (NY)	Johnson (GA)	Pascrell
Cleaver	Johnson (TX)	Payne
Clyburn	Jones	Peltola
Cohen	Joyce (OH)	Perlmutter
	Kahele	Peters
	Kaptur	Phillips
	Keating	Pingree
	Kelly (IL)	Pocan
	Khanna	Porter
	Kildee	Posey
	Kilmer	Pressley
	Kim (NJ)	Price (NC)
	Kind	Quigley
	Kirkpatrick	Raskin
	Krishnamoorthi	Rice (NY)
	Kuster	Ross
	Lamb	Roybal-Allard
	Langevin	Ruiz
	Larsen (WA)	Ruppersberger
	Larson (CT)	Rush
	Lawrence	Ryan (NY)
	Lawson (FL)	Ryan (OH)
	Lee (CA)	Salazar
	Lee (NV)	Sánchez
	Leger Fernandez	Sarbanes
		Scanlon

Schakowsky  
Schiff  
Schneider  
Schrader  
Schrier  
Scott (VA)  
Scott, David  
Sewell  
Sherman  
Sherrill  
Sires  
Slotkin  
Smith (WA)  
Smucker  
Soto  
Spanberger

Speier  
Stansbury  
Stanton  
Stevens  
Strickland  
Suoizzi  
Swalwell  
Takano  
Thompson (CA)  
Thompson (MS)  
Titus  
Tlaib  
Tonko  
Torres (CA)  
Torres (NY)  
Trahan

Trone  
Underwood  
Upton  
Vargas  
Veasey  
Velázquez  
Wasserman  
Schultz  
Waters  
Watson Coleman  
Welch  
Wexton  
Wild  
Williams (GA)  
Wilson (FL)  
Yarmuth

## NAYS—191

Aderholt  
Allen  
Amodei  
Armstrong  
Arrington  
Babin  
Balderson  
Banks  
Barr  
Bentz  
Bergman  
Bice (OK)  
Biggs  
Bilirakis  
Bishop (NC)  
Boebert  
Bost  
Brady  
Brooks  
Buchanan  
Buck  
Bucshon  
Budd  
Burchett  
Burgess  
Calvert  
Cammack  
Carey  
Carl  
Carter (GA)  
Carter (TX)  
Cawthorn  
Chabot  
Cline  
Cloud  
Clyde  
Cole  
Comer  
Conway  
Crawford  
Crenshaw  
Curtis  
Davidson  
DesJarlais  
Diaz-Balart  
Donalds  
Duncan  
Dunn  
Ellzey  
Emmer  
Estes  
Fallon  
Feenstra  
Ferguson  
Finstad  
Fischbach  
Fitzgerald  
Fleischmann  
Flood  
Franklin, C.  
Scott  
Fulcher  
Gaetz  
Gallagher

Garcia (CA)  
Gibbs  
Gimenez  
Gohmert  
Gonzales, Tony  
Good (VA)  
Gooden (TX)  
Gosar  
Granger  
Graves (LA)  
Graves (MO)  
Green (TN)  
Greene (GA)  
Griffith  
Grothman  
Guest  
Guthrie  
Harris  
Harshbarger  
Hartzler  
Hern  
Herschel  
Hice (GA)  
Higgins (LA)  
Hill  
Hollingsworth  
Hudson  
Issa  
Jackson  
Jacobs (NY)  
Johnson (LA)  
Johnson (OH)  
Johnson (SD)  
Jordan  
Joyce (PA)  
Keller  
Kelly (PA)  
Kim (CA)  
Kinzinger  
Kustoff  
LaHood  
LaMalfa  
Lamborn  
Latta  
LaTurner  
Lesko  
Letlow  
Long  
Lucas  
Luetkemeyer  
Mace  
Malliotakis  
Mann  
Massie  
Mast  
McCarthy  
McCaul  
McClain  
McClintock  
McHenry  
Meijer  
Meuser  
Miller (IL)  
Miller (WV)

Miller-Meeks  
Moolenaar  
Mooney  
Moore (AL)  
Moore (UT)  
Mullin  
Murphy (NC)  
Nehls  
Norman  
Oberholte  
Owens  
Palazzo  
Palmer  
Pence  
Perry  
Pfluger  
Reschenthaler  
Rice (SC)  
Rodgers (WA)  
Rogers (AL)  
Rogers (KY)  
Rose  
Rosendale  
Rouzer  
Roy  
Rutherford  
Scallie  
Schweikert  
Scott, Austin  
Sempolinski  
Sessions  
Simpson  
Smith (MO)  
Smith (NE)  
Smith (NJ)  
Spartz  
Staubert  
Steel  
Stefanik  
Steil  
Steube  
Stewart  
Taylor  
Tenney  
Thompson (PA)  
Tiffany  
Timmons  
Turner  
Valadao  
Van Drew  
Van Duyn  
Wagner  
Walberg  
Waltz  
Weber (TX)  
Webster (FL)  
Wenstrup  
Westerman  
Williams (TX)  
Wilson (SC)  
Wittman  
Womack  
Yakym  
Zeldin

## NOT VOTING—6

Baird  
Foxx

Hinson  
Kelly (MS)

Loudermilk  
McKinley

□ 1312

So the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

MEMBERS RECORDED PURSUANT TO HOUSE  
RESOLUTION 8, 117TH CONGRESS

Auchincloss  
(Beyer)  
Axne (Pappas)  
Beatty (Neguse)  
Bishop (NC)  
(Hice (GA))  
Boebert  
(Donalds)  
Brooks (Moore  
(AL))  
Brown (MD)  
(Evans)  
Bustos  
(Schneider)  
Butterfield  
(Beyer)  
Carter (LA)  
(Horsford)  
Cawthorn  
(Donalds)  
Cherfilus-  
McCormick  
(Brown (OH))  
Cicilline  
(Jayapal)  
Cuellar (Correa)  
DeFazio  
(Pallone)  
DelBene  
(Schneider)  
DesJarlais  
(Fleischmann)  
Dingell (Pappas)  
Doyle, Michael  
F. (Evans)  
Duncan  
(Williams  
(TX))  
Dunn (Salazar)  
Escobar (Garcia  
(TX))  
Españillat  
(Correa)  
Ferguson  
(Gonzales,  
Tony (TX))

Gaetz (Donalds)  
Gallego (Beyer)  
Gibbs (Smucker)  
Gosar (Weber  
(TX))  
Hartzler (Weber  
(TX))  
Herrera Beutler  
(Valadao)  
Issa (Calvert)  
Jackson (Van  
Duyn)  
Jacobs (NY)  
(Sempolinski)  
Johnson (TX)  
(Pallone)  
Kelly (IL)  
(Horsford)  
Khanna (Pappas)  
Kim (NJ)  
(Pallone)  
Kirkpatrick  
(Pallone)  
Krishnamoorthi  
(Pappas)  
LaHood (Kustoff)  
Larson (CT)  
(Harshbarger)  
Pappas)  
Lawrence  
(Garcia (TX))  
Lawson (FL)  
(Evans)  
Letlow (Moore  
(UT))  
Levin (CA)  
Tiffany  
(Huffman)  
Long  
(Fleischmann)  
Malliotakis  
(Armstrong)  
Maloney, Sean P.  
(Beyer)  
Meeks (Horsford)  
Moulton (Trone)  
Newman (Correa)

Norcross  
(Pallone)  
O'Halleran  
(Pappas)  
Omar (Beyer)  
Palazzo  
(Fleischmann)  
Pascarell  
(Pallone)  
Phillips (Craig)  
Pingree (Beyer)  
Porter (Beyer)  
Pressley  
(Neguse)  
Quigley  
(Schneider)  
Rice (SC) (Weber  
(TX))  
Rush (Beyer)  
Sewell  
(Schneider)  
Sherrill (Beyer)  
Simpson  
(Fulcher)  
Sires (Pallone)  
Spartz  
(Harshbarger)  
Speier (Garcia  
(TX))  
Stevens (Craig)  
Stewart (Owens)  
Strickland  
(Correa)  
Suoizzi (Correa)  
Tiffany  
(Fitzgerald)  
Titus (Pallone)  
Trahan (Lynch)  
Welch (Pallone)  
Wexton (Correa)  
Wilson (FL)  
(Evans)  
Wilson (SC)  
(Timmons)

## TENTATIVE HOUSE SCHEDULE

(Mr. HOYER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HOYER. Madam Speaker, to my colleagues, based upon the present information on the Senate timeline for passing the omnibus, the earliest the House is expected to meet is Wednesday with votes at 6:30 p.m.—that is the earliest—with the votes of the week postponed until 6:30 p.m.

The House is also expected to meet on Thursday, December 22, and will stay in session until the omnibus is completed.

If the Senate acts on the omnibus earlier in the week, Members will be given 24 hours—not the normal 72 hours—24 hours' notice to return to D.C. Members should expect the House to be in session for at least 2 legislative days next week.

The House will consider bills under suspension of the rules, and additional legislative items are possible. We all understand Christmas is Sunday and none of us want to be here, but all of us have a responsibility, obviously, to complete the business of funding the government of the United States of America, so we will be here.

We will not be here unless the Senate acts more quickly than we anticipate before Wednesday at 6:30 p.m., which will be the first votes. If it is later than that, you will also get notice. If it is earlier than that, you will get notice.

VA EMPLOYEE FAIRNESS ACT OF  
2021

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the unfinished business is the vote on passage of the bill (H.R. 1948) to amend title 38, United States Code, to modify authorities relating to the collective bargaining of employees in the Veterans Health Administration, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the passage of the bill.

This is a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 219, nays 201, not voting 10, as follows:

[Roll No. 530]

## YEAS—219

Adams  
Aguilar  
Allred  
Auchincloss  
Axne  
Bacon  
Barragan  
Beatty  
Bera  
Beyer  
Bishop (GA)  
Blumenauer  
Blunt Rochester  
Bonamici  
Bourdeaux  
Bowman  
Boyle, Brendan  
F.  
Brown (MD)  
Brown (OH)  
Brownley  
Bush  
Bustos  
Butterfield  
Carbajal  
Cárdenas  
Carson  
Carter (LA)  
Cartwright  
Case  
Casten  
Castor (FL)  
Castro (TX)  
Cherfilus-  
McCormick  
Chu  
Cicilline  
Clark (MA)  
Clarke (NY)  
Cleaver  
Clyburn  
Connolly  
Cooper  
Correa  
Costa  
Courtney  
Craig  
Crow  
Cuellar  
Davids (KS)  
Davis, Danny K.  
Dean  
DeFazio  
DeGette  
DeLauro  
DelBene  
Demings  
DeSaulnier  
Dingell  
Doggett  
Doyle, Michael  
F.  
Escobar  
Eshoo  
Españillat  
Evans  
Fitzpatrick  
Fletcher  
Foster  
Frankel, Lois  
Gallego  
Garamendi

Garcia (IL)  
Garcia (TX)  
Golden  
Gomez  
Gonzalez,  
Vicente  
Gottheimer  
Green, Al (TX)  
Grijalva  
Harder (CA)  
Hayes  
Higgins (NY)  
Himes  
Horsford  
Houlahan  
Hoyer  
Huffman  
Jackson Lee  
Jacobs (CA)  
Jayapal  
Jeffries  
Johnson (GA)  
Johnson (TX)  
Jones  
Kahale  
Kaptur  
Katko  
Keating  
Kelly (IL)  
Khanna  
Kildee  
Kilmer  
Kim (NJ)  
Kind  
Kirkpatrick  
Krishnamoorthi  
Kuster  
Lamb  
Langevin  
Larsen (WA)  
Larson (CT)  
Lawrence  
Lawson (FL)  
Lee (CA)  
Lee (NV)  
Leger Fernandez  
Levin (CA)  
Levin (MI)  
Lieu  
Lofgren  
Lowenthal  
Luria  
Lynch  
Malinowski  
Maloney,  
Carolyn B.  
Maloney, Sean  
Manning  
Matsui  
McBath  
McCollum  
McGovern  
McNerney  
Meeks  
Meng  
Mfume  
Moore (WI)  
Morelle  
Moulton  
Mrvan  
Murphy (FL)  
Nadler

Napolitano  
Neal  
Neguse  
Newman  
Norcross  
O'Halleran  
Ocasio-Cortez  
Omar  
Pallone  
Pametta  
Pappas  
Pascarell  
Payne  
Perlmutter  
Peters  
Phillips  
Pingree  
Pocan  
Porter  
Pressley  
Price (NC)  
Quigley  
Raskin  
Rice (NY)  
Ross  
Roybal-Allard  
Ruiz  
Ruppersberger  
Rush  
Ryan (NY)  
Ryan (OH)  
Sánchez  
Sarbanes  
Scanlon  
Schakowsky  
Schiff  
Schneider  
Schrader  
Schrier  
Scott (VA)  
Scott, David  
Sewell  
Sherman  
Sherrill  
Sires  
Slotkin  
Smith (NJ)  
Smith (WA)  
Soto  
Spanberger  
Speier  
Stansbury  
Stanton  
Stevens  
Strickland  
Suoizzi  
Swalwell  
Takano  
Thompson (CA)  
Thompson (MS)  
Titus  
Tlaib  
Tonko  
Torres (CA)  
Torres (NY)  
Trahan  
Trone  
Underwood  
Vargas  
Veasey  
Velázquez



Wasserman  
Schultz  
Waters  
Watson Coleman

Welch  
Wexton  
Wild  
Williams (GA)

## NAYS—201

Aderholt  
Allen  
Amodei  
Armstrong  
Arrington  
Babin  
Balderson  
Banks  
Barr  
Bentz  
Bergman  
Bice (OK)  
Biggs  
Bilirakis  
Bishop (NC)  
Boebert  
Bost  
Brady  
Brooks  
Buchanan  
Buck  
Bucshon  
Budd  
Burchett  
Burgess  
Calvert  
Cammack  
Carey  
Carl  
Carter (GA)  
Carter (TX)  
Cawthorn  
Chabot  
Cheney  
Cline  
Cloud  
Clyde  
Cole  
Conway  
Crawford  
Crenshaw  
Curtis  
Davidson  
Davis, Rodney  
DesJarlais  
Diaz-Balart  
Donalds  
Duncan  
Dunn  
Ellzey  
Emmer  
Estes  
Fallon  
Feenstra  
Ferguson  
Finstad  
Fischbach  
Fitzgerald  
Fleischmann  
Flood  
Flores  
Franklin, C.  
Fulcher  
Gaetz  
Gallagher  
Garbarino  
Garcia (CA)

Wilson (FL)  
Yarmuth

Gibbs  
Gimenez  
Gohmert  
Gonzales, Tony  
Gonzalez (OH)  
Good (VA)  
Gooden (TX)  
Gosar  
Granger  
Graves (LA)  
Graves (MO)  
Green (TN)  
Greene (GA)  
Guest  
Guthrie  
Harris  
Harshbarger  
Hartzler  
Hern  
Herrell  
Herrera Beutler  
Hice (GA)  
Higgins (LA)  
Hill  
Hollingsworth  
Hudson  
Huizenga  
Issa  
Jackson  
Jacobs (NY)  
Johnson (LA)  
Johnson (OH)  
Jordan  
Joyce (OH)  
Joyce (PA)  
Keller  
Kelly (PA)  
Kim (CA)  
Kinzinger  
Kustoff  
LaHood  
LaMalfa  
Lamborn  
Latta  
LaTurner  
Lesko  
Letlow  
Long  
Lucas  
Luetkemeyer  
Mace  
Malliotakis  
Mann  
Massie  
Mast  
McCarthy  
McCauley  
McClain  
McClintock  
McHenry  
Meijer  
Meuser  
Miller (IL)  
Miller (WV)  
Miller-Meeks  
Moolenaar

Cawthorn  
(Donalds)  
Cherfilus-  
McCormick  
(Brown (OH))  
Cicilline  
(Jayapal)  
Cuellar (Correa)  
DeFazio  
(Pallone)  
DelBene  
(Schneider)  
DesJarlais  
(Fleischmann)  
Dingell (Pappas)  
Doyle, Michael  
F. (Evans)  
Duncan  
(Williams  
(TX))  
Dunn (Salazar)  
Escobar (Garcia  
(TX))  
Espaillat  
(Correa)  
Ferguson  
(Gonzales,  
Tony (TX))  
Gaetz (Donalds)  
Gallego (Beyer)  
Gibbs (Smucker)  
Gosar (Weber  
(TX))  
Hartzler (Weber  
(TX))  
Herrera Beutler  
(Valadao)  
Issa (Calvert)  
Jackson (Van  
Duyne)

Jacobs (NY)  
(Sempolinski)  
Johnson (TX)  
(Pallone)  
Kelly (IL)  
(Horsford)  
Khanna (Pappas)  
Kim (NJ)  
(Pallone)  
Kirkpatrick  
(Pallone)  
Krishnamoorthi  
(Pappas)  
LaHood (Kustoff)  
Larson (CT)  
(Pappas)  
Lawrence  
(Garcia (TX))  
Lawson (FL)  
(Evans)  
Letlow (Moore  
(UT))  
Levin (CA)  
(Huffman)  
Long  
(Fleischmann)  
Malliotakis  
(Armstrong)  
Maloney, Sean P.  
(Beyer)  
Meeks (Horsford)  
Moulton (Trone)  
Newman (Correa)  
Norcross  
(Pallone)  
O'Halleran  
(Pappas)  
Omar (Beyer)  
Palazzo  
(Fleischmann)

Pascrell  
(Pallone)  
Phillips (Craig)  
Pingree (Beyer)  
Porter (Beyer)  
Pressley  
(Neguse)  
Quigley  
(Schneider)  
Rice (SC) (Weber  
(TX))  
Rush (Beyer)  
Sewell  
(Schneider)  
Sherrill (Beyer)  
Simpson  
(Fulcher)  
Sires (Pallone)  
Spartz  
(Harshbarger)  
Speier (Garcia  
(TX))  
Stevens (Craig)  
Stewart (Owens)  
Strickland  
(Correa)  
Suozi (Correa)  
Tiffany  
(Fitzgerald)  
Titus (Pallone)  
Trahan (Lynch)  
Welch (Pallone)  
Wexton (Correa)  
Wilson (FL)  
(Evans)  
Wilson (SC)  
(Timmons)

world in a coordinated wreath-laying ceremony. This ceremony is known as National Wreaths Across America Day.

In 1992, Morrill Worcester, from Harrington, Maine, noticed that he had an abundance of holiday wreaths and decided to take the opportunity to honor our country's veterans. After contacting his Senator, arrangements were made for wreaths to be placed at Arlington in an older section of the cemetery.

This tradition would quietly continue until 2005 when a photo of the tombstones decorated with wreaths and covered with snow went viral. From there, this quiet annual tribute to remember those who have made the ultimate sacrifice turned into a mission to remember, honor, and teach.

Since the viral photo, Wreaths Across America has continued to grow. This Saturday, volunteers will lay wreaths at more than 2,500 locations in the United States, abroad, and at sea. This simple gesture is a way for all of us to express our appreciation during the holiday season.

If you are interested in volunteering, please visit [wreathscrossamerica.org](http://wreathscrossamerica.org).

#### ENHANCING SAFETY FOR RIDESHARE PASSENGERS

(Mr. GOTTHEIMER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. GOTTHEIMER. Mr. Speaker, the House voted this week on the bipartisan Sami's Law, which I am proud to have co-led, to enhance safety for rideshare passengers.

Sami's Law has been named to honor Samantha Josephson, a senior at the University of South Carolina, originally from New Jersey, who was kidnapped and brutally murdered by a man pretending to be her Uber driver.

Under Sami's Law, all rideshare services will be required to adopt digital systems that allow passengers to verify the vehicle before they get into the car, make it illegal to sell ridesharing signs without authorization, and create a U.S. Department of Transportation council to ensure safety measures stay current.

The bill also mandates State-issued front license plates for rideshare vehicles and illuminated windshield signs visible day and night. It will examine the prevalence of assault and abuse perpetrated by rideshare drivers and passengers.

We must ensure our residents in New Jersey's Fifth District and nationwide are safe when using rideshare.

I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support commonsense measures like these to ensure the terrible tragedy that befell Samantha Josephson never happens again.

#### HONORING THE SERVICE OF BRIAN O'HARA

(Mr. HERN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1

#### DISAPPOINTED BUT NOT DEFEATED

(Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today because the Republican Party has once again chosen to stand against civil rights.

Yesterday, Senator CORY BOOKER brought the CROWN Act to the Senate floor. This bill would ban hair discrimination, including the practice of discriminating against people, Black people, because of the way their hair naturally grows out of their heads. Republicans stopped the bill in its tracks.

The CROWN Act should never ever have been a controversial bill. It simply protects our right to exist as our authentic selves. Apparently, that was just too much for today's Republican Party.

Mr. Speaker, I stand here disappointed but not defeated. I will never stop fighting for all Americans' right to exist as their authentic selves. I pray that my Republican colleagues set petty party politics aside and choose to stand for justice when the next opportunity arises.

#### RECOGNIZING NATIONAL WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA DAY

(Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a very special tradition taking place this Saturday, December 17.

Every year, thousands of volunteers set out across the country and the

## NOT VOTING—10

Baird  
Cohen  
Comer  
Fox

Hinson  
Johnson (SD)  
Kelly (MS)  
Loudermilk

McKinley  
Peltola

□ 1330

So the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### MEMBERS RECORDED PURSUANT TO HOUSE RESOLUTION 8, 117TH CONGRESS

Auchincloss  
(Beyer)  
Axne (Pappas)  
Beatty (Neguse)  
Bishop (NC)  
Bishop (GA)

Boebert  
(Donalds)  
Brooks (Moore  
(AL))  
Brown (MD)  
(Evans)

Bustos  
(Schneider)  
Butterfield  
(Beyer)  
Carter (LA)  
(Horsford)

minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HERN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Brian O'Hara in appreciation for his outstanding public service to the people of Oklahoma's First Congressional District and wish him well as he enters retirement.

Brian has spent nearly 10 years serving constituents in our district office as a congressional staffer, first with my predecessor, Jim Bridenstine, and then in our office. He has a lifetime of knowledge and experience that our office will dearly miss as he leaves his post.

Prior to his congressional staff career, Brian served as a councilman for the city of Jenks. He had a robust business career, as well.

In his private life, Brian contributes much of his time, money, and efforts to benefit several good causes. However, no cause has meant more to Brian than fighting against cancer, and I don't know anyone who has been a better ambassador for this profound effort.

Brian, thank you for serving our constituents in the great State of Oklahoma like every day is Christmas. Merry Christmas to you and your wife, Karen, and happy retirement.

#### WHAT AMERICA MAKES AND GROWS, MAKES AND GROWS AMERICA

(Ms. KAPTUR asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I rise to share a good news story from Ohio's Ninth Congressional District.

During this holiday season, I humbly ask all Americans to do what they can to buy goods made right here in the USA. What America makes and grows, makes and grows America.

Recently, I had the pleasure of patronizing two longstanding Toledo businesses, Fulkerson Jewelers and Clock Shop and Keystone Press. Both are small legacy businesses in the heart of our community. Together, they have existed for well over 160 years.

Both establishments and their able, friendly staff embody American ingenuity, craftsmanship, hard work, and perseverance.

At Fulkerson, a friendly young repairman replaced the battery in my watch in the blink of an eye. He even does laser welding.

At Keystone, I dropped off materials to print for our office holiday mailings. This printing shop has been in business for over 100 years.

Small family businesses embody all the charm, diversity, and creativity of America. So may I urge all Americans this holiday season to buy local, buy American, and support your hometown businesses that build and grow America.

#### HONORING THE EXEMPLARY CAREER OF DR. THOMAS ZACHARIA

(Mr. FLEISCHMANN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. FLEISCHMANN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Oak Ridge National Laboratory Director Dr. Thomas Zacharia, who will retire at the end of this year, concluding an exemplary career.

Throughout his 35 years at ORNL, Dr. Zacharia has delivered groundbreaking scientific and technical accomplishments for energy, national security, and economic benefit to the Nation. Through the 1980s and 1990s, his extraordinary vision served as the guide for establishing a world-leading computing institution at Oak Ridge.

His visionary leadership has resulted in the deployment of four number one computers in the world since 2009, with the Frontier supercomputer breaking the exascale barrier in May 2022. As laboratory director, Dr. Zacharia has expanded ORNL's scientific impact in national security, isotopes, biology and environmental systems science, and energy technologies.

Dr. Zacharia's extraordinary journey from postdoctoral researcher in 1987 to lab director from 2017 to 2022 is well recognized. I thank him for his service, and I wish him well in his future endeavors.

#### DECOLONIZING THE PEOPLE OF PUERTO RICO

(Mr. TORRES of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. TORRES of New York. Mr. Speaker, as a Puertorriqueno, I am proud to have voted for the Puerto Rico Status Act, which, if enacted, would begin to break the cycle of colonialism that, for more than a century, has relegated Puerto Rico to second-class status.

The landmark legislation would empower Puerto Rico to be in command of its own political destiny.

What matters above all is not the particular status that the people will ultimately choose. What matters is the right of the people to choose the status that best expresses their will and the right of the people to have their will given the binding power it has long deserved.

If enacted, the Puerto Rico Status Act would not only restore democracy on the island, but it would also reinforce democracy here on the mainland United States because it would mean no longer depriving 3 million of our fellow citizens of their fundamental right to self-determination.

I call on the Senate to join the people's House in decolonizing the people of Puerto Rico.

□ 1345

#### MAKING DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME PERMANENT

(Mr. MOONEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MOONEY. Mr. Speaker, today, the Sun will set in Washington, D.C., at 4:47 p.m. Washington is known as a partisan place and labeled the capital of gridlock. However, there is one issue most Members of Congress agree on: Making daylight savings time permanent.

Earlier this year, Senator MARCO RUBIO introduced this legislation to help boost economic activity and improve physical and mental health. The bill passed the U.S. Senate unanimously.

My colleague, VERN BUCHANAN from Florida, introduced companion legislation in this Chamber that also has strong bipartisan support. Unfortunately, however, it has never been reported out of committee.

Today, I initiated a discharge petition to bring this legislation up for immediate consideration. In the last 5 years, 19 States have enacted similar legislation. The time to make daylight savings time permanent is now.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to sign this discharge petition and never reset your clocks again.

#### HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF JUDGE JAMES ORTEGA PEREZ

(Mr. CORREA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CORREA. Mr. Speaker, this is a great country. I rise to honor the life and legacy of Judge James Ortega Perez. Part of the Greatest Generation, Judge Ortega Perez grew up in my district, in a segregated community, a farmworker. When World War II started, he answered the call of duty and joined the Army where he served as a sergeant with the Army Corps of Engineers.

After fighting for this great country, he came back and finished his high school graduation at Santa Ana High School, but he wasn't done. Then he enrolled at the University of Southern California, where he got a bachelor's degree and then went on to USC Law School. He then became the first Latino attorney in Orange County, California. Then he was appointed as the first Latino judge in Orange County, California.

It is a great country. Judge Ortega Perez went from being a farmworker to the halls of justice in Orange County. Today, we honor the life and legacy of Judge Ortega Perez.

#### TIME TO END THE COVID-19 EMERGENCY

(Mr. LAMALFA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1

minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, not that long ago, the President declared COVID to be pretty much over with. So I rise today in support of H.J. Res. 46, which would basically end the fantasy that our current understanding of COVID-19 and its present spread in the United States requires Congress to still give extraordinary powers to the President. It is time to end the emergency.

Similar resolutions have passed the Senate twice. Here in the House, they have been blocked twice by the Democrats.

Mr. Speaker, this is no longer a new virus or a new pandemic. It is well past time for the House to follow the Senate's lead and bring a joint resolution to the floor to end this charade.

With the President wanting to end title 42, so that tens of thousands of illegal immigrants can come across our border with little to no health check, why in the world are we still painted into a corner as American citizens with emergency powers granted to the executive? It is time to pass H.J. Res. 46.

#### RECOGNIZING AMY WORTH

(Mr. DESAULNIER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DESAULNIER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the service of Amy Worth, a wonderful constituent and friend.

It has been my pleasure to have worked alongside Amy through her many contributions to the bay area and her community. From library commissioner to city council member to mayor to chair of the Bay Area Metropolitan Transportation Commission, Amy has selflessly served the city of Orinda and the bay area for the last 24 years and has served as mayor of Orinda for 5 years.

As a member of the Contra Costa Transportation Authority, her leadership was critical in a major transportation improvement, the expansion of the Caldecott Tunnel in the east bay, which improved traffic congestion throughout the bay area. She also helped pass Measure J, a transportation sales tax.

Her passion and commitment to her family and community are extraordinary. Amy has always been a dear friend and a tenacious force for good in our community and in my life.

Please join me in congratulating Amy on her well-deserved retirement and honoring her for her many years of dedicated public service to her community.

#### CONGRATULATING JACK CAMPBELL

(Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate University of Iowa's Jack Campbell for being named to the All-American Football Team and being recognized as this year's Butkus Award winner, the first in the university's history.

This is not Jack's first accolade. He was also named the Butkus-Fitzgerald Big Ten Linebacker of the Year award recipient as well as the Nagurski-Wooden Big Ten Defensive Player of the Year, and he received the William V. Campbell Trophy throughout his 4 years with the Hawkeyes.

This season, Jack had 118 tackles, two interceptions, one recovered fumble, and one forced fumble. Jack was pivotal in leading the defensive lineup to be named one of the best in the country, making him very deserving of these awards.

Jack is another example of the University of Iowa students excelling inside and outside of the classroom.

Congratulations to Jack on an outstanding 4 years, and I wish you the very best in your future endeavors.

Go Hawkeyes.

#### CRISIS AT THE SOUTHERN BORDER

(Mr. GROTHMAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GROTHMAN. Mr. Speaker, just a few minutes ago on this floor, we were admonished for not wrapping up our budget in time. That is a fair thing. We are supposed to take care of our budget.

Another thing we are not taking care of, and the American public ought to be appalled until we do, is the new news on the border. I talked to a prior expert down there and got even more terrifying information.

Now, first of all, in November, we had 73,000 what they call got-aways, people not even touched by the Border Patrol, breaking the previous all-time high by 24 percent in one month.

Isn't that something we ought to come back next week to take care of?

Not only that. I had suspected this, but apparently the Border Patrol is concerned about where the unaccompanied minors are winding up. These are minors who come here without their parents. All they have is an address. We don't confirm—or they believe we don't confirm—that parents or aunts or uncles or somebody is at that address or if they show up at a house and maybe there are 10 single males in the house, a young woman—we don't even know.

It is time this place began to do some committee hearings on where the unaccompanied children, who should be spun back around to their home country, wind up.

#### PROUD TO VOTE FOR PUERTO RICO

(Mr. BOWMAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1

minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BOWMAN. Madam Speaker, today, I was proud to vote for the Puerto Rico Status Act and supporting its passage in the House of Representatives. Now, it is time for the Senate to do its job and free the Puerto Rico community and the Puerto Rican island to chart its own path toward self-determination.

Puerto Rico has been a U.S. territory since 1898 without proper representation in the United States Government. That is unacceptable.

Now, finally, if the Senate does its job, the people of Puerto Rico can chart their own path forward and decide for themselves what is best for them.

I was proud to take that vote today in support of my constituents, as well as my family, as I am married to a Puerto Rican woman and my children are Puerto Rican, as well.

Let's continue to support the self-determination of the people on the island and the self-determination of people all over the world.

#### MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Byrd, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed without amendment bills of the House of the following titles:

H.R. 5943. An act to designate the outpatient clinic of the Department of Veterans Affairs in Greenville, South Carolina, as the "Lance Corporal Dana Cornell Darnell VA Clinic".

H.R. 5973. An act to reauthorize the Great Lakes Fish and Wildlife Restoration Act of 1990, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that the Senate has passed with amendments in which the concurrence of the House is requested, bills of the House of the following titles:

H.R. 1917. An act to modify eligibility requirements for certain hazard mitigation assistance programs, and for other purposes.

H.R. 5343. An act to direct the Comptroller General of the United States to submit a report to Congress on case management personnel turnover of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that the Senate has passed bills of the following titles in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 1143. An act to prohibit certain individuals from downloading or using TikTok on any device issued by the United States or a government corporation.

S. 2135. An act to amend title 31, United States Code, to require the Chief Operating Officer of each agency to compile a list of unnecessary programs, and for other purposes.

S. 3429. An act to establish an Alaska Salmon Research Task Force.

S. 4460. An act to require the Commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection to regularly review and update policies and manuals related to inspections at ports of entry.

S. 4893. An act to amend the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995 to require certain disclosures by registrants regarding exemptions

under the Foreign Agents Registration Act of 1938, as amended.

The message also announced that the Senate agrees to the amendment of the House to the bill (S. 1687) entitled “An Act to amend section 21 of the Small Business Act to require cyber certification for small business development center counselors, and for other purposes.”.

The message also announced that the Senate agrees to the amendment of the House to the bill (S. 3846) entitled “An Act to reauthorize the Justice and Mental Health Collaboration Program, and for other purposes.”.

#### CELEBRATING DEPARTING MEMBERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. BUSH). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2021, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. LEVIN of Michigan. Madam Speaker, this is an hour to celebrate Members who are departing this Congress, including myself, and I have some remarks to share. I will also be joined later by the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY), but first we are going to hear from the chairman of the Subcommittee on the Legislative Branch of the Committee on Appropriations of the U.S. House of Representatives, one of our cardinals, a great public servant from the State of Ohio, Representative TIM RYAN.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. RYAN).

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Michigan for putting this together. You can see that Ohio and Michigan can periodically get along with each other.

I am honored to rise for a few minutes here, Mr. Speaker, to address this House for the final time as a sitting Member of Congress. I think it is appropriate to begin with the preamble to the United States Constitution.

“We the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect Union, establish justice, ensure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity.”

“We the people.” This is the people's House. There have been 12,421 Members of Congress who have sat here in this Capitol. Of almost 700 million people, who at one point or another were citizens of the United States, 700 million, and a little over 12,000 were sent here to govern this country, to meet the obligations that the Founding Fathers put in the preamble of the United States Constitution.

I will tell you, there have been some great Americans, some of the best, who have served in this Chamber. But there also have been scoundrels, crooks, and liars. This is the people's House. This is the people's House, so it has reflected over, in a few years, 250 years, the world's oldest republic.

If there is one thing I hope that all Members and all citizens can grasp and touch, it is gratitude. I know I feel tremendously grateful to come from a working-class family in Ohio and end up here for 20 years serving the communities that I grew up in, that I played sports in, that I raised my family in. It is an honor to be a citizen of the United States.

This country has fed more people, clothed more people, cured more people, and liberated more people than all the other countries in the world combined.

I think to get out of this mess that we are in, the polarization, the hate, the anger, the fear, the first step out of that is with gratitude. If we all start from a place of gratitude, we will have a much different opinion of the country, of each other, and of what is possible for us, because this country has always done great things. But we do great things when we are together, when we embrace normalcy, when we embrace decency, when we embrace compassion.

When you walk through these doors, you are a leader, and you are charged with making the tough decisions, the hard decisions, not the easy decisions, not the ones that are going to make your next election a little easier. But the challenge today is to be called to lead and lead vigorously, lead boldly, because that is what the world needs us to do right now.

This country has always been innovative. We need to enter an era of reform, of reconciliation, and of innovation across the board.

The systems are all broken. The economic system is broken, the immigration system is broken, the welfare system is broken, the education system is broken, and we are not going to fix these if we are not decent to each other, if we don't talk to each other.

□ 1400

Some of the solutions will be conservative, some will be liberal and progressive, but it is through that conflict, those arguments and debates that this very Chamber was set up to do that we come to the best possible solution, and that, ultimately, is what we are talking about.

We the people have got to come together. As we approach the 250th anniversary of this country, let us renew our commitment to each other so that we can meet President Lincoln's charge “that this Nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom—and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the Earth.”

Mr. LEVIN of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. RYAN for his wonderful public service here not only for the people of Ohio, but really for all the people of this country.

What does it mean to run for Congress, to serve in Congress? Why do it?

Personally, I didn't run for Congress until I was 58 years old, after a career

as a union organizer, a human rights activist, running Michigan's workforce system, and creating innovative new programs under then-Governor Jennifer Granholm, our Energy Secretary today, and then starting my own statewide clean energy finance market as a green energy entrepreneur. But a Trump Presidency put these priorities, each and every one of them, and indeed our very democracy in grave danger, and I was inspired to run to replace my father after his retirement.

Coming into Congress with the historic freshman class of House Democrats in the 116th Congress, we started in the middle of a record-breaking government shutdown. Our very first action as an office was gathering impacted workers together alongside my Michigan colleagues at the Detroit airport. We had workers reflecting the full range of Federal duties: From transportation professionals to environmental stewards who worked for the EPA.

Gathering this coalition would serve as a model for the work we would do over the next 4 years. When our staff met at UAW Region One a few months later for our first retreat, we would define our priorities, and it was really three overarching priorities for our office: First, raising the standard of living for working people; second, protecting our one precious Earth; and third, fighting for human rights at home and abroad. We have organized our work around these priorities ever since.

Let's start with raising the standard of living for working people. Certainly, making education affordable is a key part of that. After the Speaker appointed me to the Education and Labor Committee, I was honored to be elected vice chair of the committee by my fellow Democrats.

And then Chairman BOBBY SCOTT asked me to lead the America's College Promise Act to provide 2 years of tuition-and-fee-free community college and also 2 years of virtually free study at historically Black colleges and universities and other minority-serving institutions.

We introduced the bill, and we debated it. But can you imagine how amazing it was when Joe Biden was moving toward the nomination to be the Democratic candidate for President and he adopted my bill, and then he made it part of his Build Back Better plan?

I had the privilege of welcoming First Lady Jill Biden to a community college in my district once and Education Secretary Miguel Cardona to two different community colleges to celebrate the inclusion of this bill in the President's Build Back Better plan and fight for its passage. We didn't get it across the finish line due to the intransigence of one person, JOE MANCHIN, but we are not about to give up until we make free community college and accessibility of HBCUs for everyone a reality.

Probably the biggest area of my advocacy for workers and their families came in labor and employment policy.

I served as a whip to push the Raise the Wage Act through the House, and we fended off efforts to water it down with things like regional minimum wages that would consign poor areas of this country to permanent, structural poverty. We had to fight hard to keep the one fair wage aspect in the bill, to make sure we end subminimum wages for tipped workers, who are mostly women and disproportionately of color.

I helped write the PRO Act and was so honored to play a special role in shepherding it through the Education and Labor Committee and the floor of the House.

I led a small band of labor stalwarts in opposition to Trump's new NAFTA, which is called the USMCA. While I fervently hope the legislation succeeds, and I have worked with the Biden administration to ensure that Mexico and Canada meet their obligations, I fear too much of our trade policy discards the views of workers here at home and also abroad in the name of furthering the interests of multinational corporations. That has to end, and we have to put workers' interests and the planet's interests first.

One core part of my belief about how to be a Congressman is that it is not all about passing legislation and overseeing the administration. When it comes to labor issues, I believe you have got to get out there and support workers' organizing and bargaining campaigns directly. We did this many, many times. Let me give you just a few examples.

We organized a major solidarity action when the UAW struck General Motors, and I walked the picket line regularly and welcomed many colleagues, including Senator ELIZABETH WARREN.

When the RWDSU helped Amazon workers in Bessemer, Alabama, organize to join the union, I organized a delegation of Congresspeople to go down there with me, and I went a second time by myself to join current AFL-CIO president Liz Shuler to encourage the workers to keep fighting after they lost their first election, which was marred by many unfair labor practices by the corporation.

I organized almost all of my fellow Harvard alums in the House to support Harvard grad employees when they were campaigning to win a first contract, and that was ultimately successful under pressure from us and many others.

More recently, when Senate cafeteria workers who are members of UNITE HERE Local 23 were fighting for a long overdue, just contract, I got arrested with many of them to push the issue. Happily, Mr. Speaker, they won a good contract soon thereafter.

Just recently, I participated in campaigns to support railroaders who desperately need paid sick days and the demand for full funding for the National Labor Relations Board so it can

fulfill its function to support private sector workers' rights to organize and bargain collectively.

I can tell you, I am going to continue not only my own efforts to support workers, but I am going to continue organizing Members of Congress to be involved.

There is so much more we can and must do to lift up working families and help them live dignified lives. We did preserve the pensions of millions of American workers. I am so proud we got that done.

I was proud to fight with my brothers and sisters in the Progressive Caucus to include affordable childcare, universal preschool for 3- and 4-year-olds, paid sick leave for all, and the child tax credit in the House version of Build Back Better. Congress needs to keep fighting to get these things done.

Our team was super active on our second priority as well, protecting our one precious Earth. Let's start with clean air, water, and land. I joined the bipartisan PFAS task force right away, and I passed legislation twice to prevent the harmful incineration of PFAS chemicals, especially on military bases. We have so much more work to do on PFAS, that is for sure. It is truly the DDT of our times, and we have got to deal with it.

Around Christmas of 2019 green ooze began to leak out onto I-696, the interstate highway through my district in the town of Madison Heights. My staff and I led an effort to help ensure the cleanup of toxic waste, in coordination with the EPA and State and local governments, and it was really everybody working together that got it done.

There were many such efforts, but of course my biggest focus was climate change. I supported the original Green New Deal resolution from day one. I remember being out on the lawn when we introduced it. I am one of only 27 Senators and Representatives out of 535, Mr. Speaker, to support all 12 Green New Deal bills. Even more importantly, I helped put meat on the bones personally in several ways.

Senator ELIZABETH WARREN and I authored the BUILD Green Act to invest \$500 billion over 10 years to jump-start the transition to all-electric public vehicles, mass transit, rail, and help modernize the Nation's crumbling infrastructure.

Senator SHERROD BROWN and I introduced the American Energy Worker Opportunity Act to support fossil fuel and coal workers and their families impacted by the transition we need to make as soon as possible to clean energy. Simply stated, workers who, over generations, built up wonderful pay and benefit packages; if they work on a pipeline or a refinery or a coal mine, it is not their fault that we have to change, and they shouldn't suffer, and that bill would take care of that issue.

I introduced the EV Freedom Act with Representative ALEXANDRIA OCASIO-CORTEZ to build a nationwide network of high-speed EV chargers to

transform our transportation sector and end our reliance on fossil fuels.

And I am still going, right up to my last days in Congress. Today, this very day, I partnered with the chair of the Speaker's Select Committee on Climate Crisis, KATHY CASTOR from Tampa, to introduce the CLEANER Buildings Act, my bill, alongside her bill, the LOWER Energy Bills Act. These pieces of legislation will ensure we can meet President Biden's goal to reduce economy-wide emissions and transform our Nation's buildings to be energy efficient and climate resilient.

Mr. Speaker, people count the amount of emissions, greenhouse gas emissions, in different ways, but if you add up the energy we use to heat and cool and light our buildings, it is 42 percent of all the emissions in this country, all the electricity and natural gas. So we really have to deal with that.

These measures are collaborations between my amazing staff and many advocacy groups fighting for environmental justice and to save life on Earth as we know it in a way that actually advances racial and economic justice.

In terms of my priorities, the third is peace and human rights for all people everywhere, and we have been equally active in that area as well.

First, though, let me say that while I have worked super hard on peace, this is probably Congress' and the Democratic Party's greatest weakness. Our business is largely unfinished on these. For example, authorizations for use of military force, or AUMF.

The Constitution says this body, the Congress, the Article I body, is responsible for deciding when to send our young people into harm's way, and then the President is the Commander in Chief. We have fallen down in this duty, and we are still falling down.

We are relying on decades-old authorizations for use of military force. We ought to have the guts to end every one of them and work with the administration when we need a new one to put it into place. Every time we do it, it should have a sunset so that we force ourselves to make the hard decisions about war and peace.

Secondly, nuclear nonproliferation. I don't need to talk long about this. Almost nothing is happening. We are down to having one agreement with Russia left. We are really nowhere with China. We have an increasing number of nuclear states. We are, hopefully, battling hard to keep Iran from joining them. But we need to get back to the business that was really bipartisan.

Who can forget Ronald Reagan taking on ending the use of nuclear weapons? So we have really got a long way to go there.

Also, Mr. Speaker, reducing military spending. My goodness. Just the increase in the Pentagon budget that we passed through this House in the NDAA recently, the other day, just the increase above what the Pentagon asked

for that Congress stuffed in there would have paid for my whole America's College Promise Act, plus some other big needs of the American people. I am for the U.S. absolutely being the strongest military in the world, but we shouldn't be spending more than the next 8 to 10 countries combined.

We have got to have a diplomacy first, a peace first, a human rights first foreign policy and take care of the needs of our people and the poor and working people around the world.

□ 1415

As a lifelong human rights advocate, I feel I can say that we had more success in the human rights area. Although, the situation is certainly dire in so many parts of the world. Let me mention just a few highlights.

The House passed my bipartisan resolution condemning the coup in Burma, and we have continued oversight of the very troubling human rights situation there, as well as the inspiring efforts of the Burmese people to resist repression.

Indeed, my first foreign trip as a Congressman was to Bangladesh to visit Rohingya refugees just over the border from Burma there.

I have been a vocal advocate for human rights in places like India, which is in danger of becoming a Hindu nationalist state rather than a secular democracy; the world's largest democracy.

I am a lover of Hinduism, a lover of Jainism, Buddhism, other religions that were born in India, but we need to protect the rights of all people there, whether they are Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists, Jews, Christians, Jains—whatever.

I have been active about human rights in Egypt, where thousands of political prisoners languish in jail. Israel and Palestine have been a particular focus of mine. I am proud to have written the Two-State Solution Act, the most forward-leaning U.S. bill in many years to try to hold Israeli and Palestinian leaders alike accountable to take steps to advance a two-state solution.

Now, with a far-right government filled with troubling racist and homophobic leaders taking over in Israel, all of us who love that country's democratic ideals and seek justice for Palestinians as well will have to redouble our efforts. Perhaps my biggest focus in this area has been Haiti.

I founded the first House Haiti Caucus in Congress in decades and recruited three dynamic Congresswomen who represent large Haitian-American constituencies to co-chair with me: VAL DEMINGS of Florida, YVETTE CLARKE of New York, and AYANNA PRESSLEY of Massachusetts.

With the support of our great Committee on Foreign Affairs chairman, GREG MEEKS, we greatly increased Congressional oversight of U.S. policy on Haiti, including two standalone hearings with witnesses representing di-

verse perspectives and a Department of Homeland Security review of its policies after the humanitarian disaster in Del Rio.

We have pointed out that the status quo is untenable, and we have demanded inclusion of the breadth of Haitian civil society in dealing with the ongoing crisis there.

Whether on our three overarching priority areas that I have just discussed or other vital matters, like reducing the epidemic of gun violence, one thing I want to emphasize is that working in Congress is all about teamwork. We have got a tremendous amount done in these last 4 years, and it is all due to an amazing team of individuals who brought tremendous idealism, passion, professionalism, hard work, and love to make life better for working families.

I am going to share the names of everyone who has worked on Team Levin these last 4 years. Let's start with the District Office in alphabetical order: Jenny Byer; Robert Charara; Will Cochran; Eleanor Gamalski; Jolie Habashy; Walt Herzig; Zeenath Hussain; Dan Klein; Kyle Pollet; Lauren Schandevell; Amairris Simmons; Justin Walters; Sean Wolski; America Yahya; Stephanie Yaldo-Sheena.

And here in the Washington, D.C. office:

Abbas Alawieh; Mez Araya; Taryn Brown; Don Chen; Erica Fein; Ben Gerstein; Julia Kalusniak; Courtney Laudick; Austin Lauferweiler; MaryGrace Menner; Ven Neralla; Colton Puckett; Catherine Rowland; Jamari Torrence; Alex Schmitt; Sabrina Steel; Derrick Utley; Janae Washington, who is sitting here with me now; and Jacob Wilson.

And what did we get done, this amazing group of people?

In the 116th Congress, speaking of legislation, we introduced 59 pieces of legislation: 22 bills, 30 amendments, and 7 resolutions.

We passed 40 pieces of legislation through the House of Representatives: 10 bills and 30 amendments.

And we got 6 pieces of legislation all the way through the process and signed into law by that previous President.

In the 117th Congress, as of earlier this week, we introduced 50 pieces of legislation: 32 bills, 13 amendments, and 5 resolutions. And we are introducing three more pieces of legislation yet this week, one of which I mentioned.

We passed 21 pieces of legislation through the House so far: 6 bills, 2 resolutions, and 13 amendments; and we saw three pieces of legislation signed into law.

Mr. Speaker, we are still hoping for two more: Renaming the post offices in Bloomfield Township and Hazel Park, two Michigan communities in my district.

Passing legislation is just one part of our work. Serving all of our constituents, regardless of their political views

or their circumstances, is another big part.

The bottom line, being a good Member of Congress is about taking care of people, whether their problems relate to immigration, Social Security, veteran benefits—whatever. And rather than get into numbers here, let me focus on just a few stories.

We led a bipartisan push to prevent the deportation of Iraqi nationals, and we secured the return of Jimmy Aldaoud's remains to the U.S. after he was deported, and he died of diabetic shock just weeks later. That man had never set foot in Iraq, he spoke no Arabic. He was obviously American. I won't go into all the upset about that, but his tragic story helped awaken society to these senseless deportations.

Together, we helped our residents navigate a once-in-a-century pandemic. We worked with State partners to help constituents obtain expanded pandemic unemployment benefits that this House created, and we worked with the State Department to help constituents stuck overseas during the early global COVID shutdown. We helped them make it home. And we helped countless small businesses, of course, obtain PPE and the EIDL loans.

We fought successfully for the release of a Black high school student who was put in juvenile detention for not completing her homework, Mr. Speaker, during remote learning; put in, essentially, jail for young people.

Remember the story of Grace, as she was called? It made national news. And the fact that it happened speaks to structural racism in educational and criminal justice systems. And the need to fight it both case-by-case, like we did with Grace, and systemically to end it as a future of our country.

We helped a Royal Oak couple overcome incredible odds to be able to complete their fertility treatment overseas during the height of the pandemic.

Just last month, my wife Mary and I visited with this wonderful couple and the son who was born as a result of these efforts, who is today a healthy toddler.

And what to say about the case of Danny Fenster, a journalist who attended the same high school as me who was held as a political prisoner for 5½ months in the horrible, insane prison in Burma.

His incredibly tenacious family and I were in constant contact, and I spoke to ambassadors across the globe working to bring him home.

My staff and I were so honored to join the family to welcome him home to the U.S. when he touched down in New York, and to follow his continued advocacy for press freedom in Burma and everywhere. And today, he is a journalism fellow at one of our most prestigious universities.

One of the things I think is most important for an effective Congressional operation is breaking down barriers and creating great collaboration between the D.C. and district offices. It is not that easy.



Let me share a few stories that illustrate why I think this is so important. In a virtual outreach event with sexual assault survivors and advocates, we met Carmen Wargel of Royal Oak and heard about significant problems for survivors seeking to prosecute those who abused them.

Because of that activity in the district, we authored an amendment that passed the House in the Violence Against Women Act to promote better outcomes and care through vertical integration in prosecution of sexual assault.

Okay, let me put this straight. I had never heard of virtual integration in prosecution. I am a lawyer. I know what virtual integration is in business. I had never heard of it.

When we put together what had happened to this person—I think she had five different prosecutors on her case, one after the other—it was because of our discussions with constituents in the district that we wrote legislation that passed the House.

Another big deal for us was introducing a resolution recognizing Abortion Provider Appreciation Day. It was the first time this had ever been done in Congressional history. But we didn't just do this in D.C. It was inspired by abortion care providers at home in the district, and we marked it with an event at the Northland Family Planning Clinic with Renee and Lara Chelian in Sterling Heights, Michigan.

Certainly, our Community Project Funding projects are another great example of D.C.-district collaboration. We worked with community leaders to put forward projects for Federal funding in line with our shared priorities; nearly \$28 million when you combine fiscal years 2022 and 2023. In March of this year, 2022, all 10 of our projects for the fiscal year were signed into law by President Joe Biden.

To give just a few examples of this, we are providing 3.5 million gallons of additional storage at the Chapaton Retention Basin to reduce combined sewage overflows, alleviate residential basement flooding during heavy rain events, and improve the water quality of Lake St. Clair, which serves as a source of drinking water for much of Southeast Michigan.

We are creating a community space to serve as a heating and cooling center for residents of Hazel Park and neighboring Ferndale, a gallery for local artists, and a location for job fairs and educational seminars.

We are establishing an Individual Development Account program at Macomb Community College for workforce development and certification courses, offering direct services to individuals to enhance employment opportunities and regional prosperity.

We have done a lot, and I am so proud of all that this team has accomplished, and especially the way we have done it, not just working hard but supporting each other. Building the beloved community from the inside out,

even as we fight for justice in our local communities and in far-flung areas all across this planet.

So I suppose there is no better place to conclude than one of our signal achievements: Passing a resolution to allow the staff of this very House of Representatives to organize unions and bargain collectively.

Amazingly, Congress passed legislation in 1995 to apply Federal employment regulations including collective bargaining to Capitol Hill. But when they implemented the legislation in 1996 the next year, they included the Capitol Police and the Library of Congress and the Architect of the Capitol, and so forth. But they left out the people who work with us most directly—our own staff in the district offices, in our D.C. offices, and on our committees.

That was 26 years ago, and that wrong was never corrected until this year when House employees came to introduce a resolution to extend these basic rights of democracy to our staff, and together, we passed it through this House of Representatives.

I was so moved when my own staff were the very first to organize a union with a Congressional Workers Union, and now they are the very first to bargain a contract.

Mr. Speaker, already 14 offices have voted to unionize with CWU, so the precedent is set, and I believe more offices will organize and more contracts will be bargained in the 118th Congress.

That is why I came to Congress, to expand human rights, to expand the voice and power of workers and justice for their families, whether they are in the halls of Congress or on farms or in factories or offices across this land and beyond our shores.

I don't believe in the great person theory of history, Mr. Speaker. This has never been about me as a person or a leader. It is about building a team that wants to fight for justice. It is about partnering with activists doing the same. It is about learning from each other, falling down, and getting up to fight on another day.

I am so grateful to the people of Michigan's Ninth District for giving me the opportunity to serve you in this way. I have learned so much from you in our union halls, our veterans' lodges, our school buildings, and our workplaces.

As I leave Congress, I believe just as strongly as I did when I started helping workers organize unions with SEIU in 1983, that it is for the working people to set the direction of this country. That is our hope to tackle climate change. That is our hope to create a world of racial and economic justice. Onward we go.

□ 1430

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY), one of my amazing colleagues, the chairwoman of the House Committee on Oversight and Re-

form, and a fearless champion for New Yorkers and Americans from all over this country.

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Madam Speaker, to my colleagues on both sides of the aisle, it has been a privilege to have had this extraordinary opportunity to serve with you for the past 30 years in the House of Representatives.

A special thank you to our tremendous Democratic House leadership. Thank you, Majority Leader STENY HOYER, for being a great strategist, mentor, and friend; and, Majority Whip JIM CLYBURN, for what you have taught me and all that you have done for this great Nation.

Thank you to Speaker NANCY PELOSI, a trailblazer who was the first female Speaker of the House in history and is rightfully being called the most effective Speaker in modern times. A very special mention to the new minority leader, HAKEEM JEFFRIES. New York is so proud of you.

Like Speaker PELOSI, my career has been a series of firsts. I was the first woman to represent my district on the city council and to represent my district in Congress and the first in history to give birth while on the city council. Many men became fathers, but I was the first one to become a mother while serving on the city council.

I was also the first woman to serve as chair of the Joint Economic Committee, as well as the House Committee on Oversight and Reform.

I remember almost as if it were yesterday, walking toward the Capitol as a newly elected Member. I had just defeated a 14-year incumbent Republican, who outspent me 4 to 1. No one thought I could win. Yet, I did, and I had such a feeling of hope and optimism for what could be done to help people.

I will never forget walking down the aisle, not to get married but to be sworn into the United States Congress. I said it then, and it is still true today, that serving in the United States Congress is the thrill, honor, and extraordinary opportunity of a lifetime.

The first time I ever walked onto the floor of this historic Chamber was 1992. It was called the Year of the Woman.

I announced my run for Congress on the day of the Planned Parenthood v. Casey Supreme Court decision, which placed restrictions on Roe to a woman's right to choose.

Along with great New York leaders like Bella Abzug, Geraldine Ferraro, and Elizabeth Holtzman, they expressed their outrage, and I announced my run for Congress to fight to reverse this situation and to bring other changes.

It is really hard to believe that, years later, in 2022, the Supreme Court didn't just chip away at abortion. They bulldozed our rights into the ground, depriving 33 million American women of access to abortion.

When I first entered Congress, about 10 percent of Congress were women. Back then, the entire Women's Caucus

could meet in an elevator. Our numbers have now moved to 149, or nearly 28 percent.

As the great New Yorker Shirley Chisholm once said: "You don't make progress by standing on the sidelines, whimpering and complaining. You make progress by implementing ideas."

There is no better place in the world to implement new ideas than the United States Congress, and that is just what I did.

In the last 30 years, I have authored and passed more than 80 bills and had 12 Presidential bill signings with five of our Presidents, which are usually reserved for transformational legislation.

President Clinton signed my Nazi War Crimes Disclosure Act and the Standby Guardianship Act for children. President Bush signed my Debbie Smith Act, which has been called the most important antirape legislation ever passed, as well as many sex trafficking prevention laws, and CFIUS, the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States, to protect our infrastructure and country.

In 2009, President Obama signed my Credit Card Bill of Rights, which, according to the CFPB, the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, has saved consumers over \$16 billion each year since 2009.

Even President Trump signed my Never Again Education Act to support Holocaust education, as well as the 9/11 Health and Compensation Act, which is part of the reason why my coat is hanging here.

I wore this coat for well over a year, every single day, until we approved the necessary funding for this vital program to help our heroes and heroines.

They were there for us. We need to be there for them, and they still need more help. More legislation needs to be passed this year to help them.

Just this past April, President Biden signed my bipartisan Postal Service Reform Act. Thanks to Oversight Committee Ranking Member JAMES COMER, we proved that bipartisanship can prevail over partisan bickering in the best interests of America.

All of these achievements would not have been possible without my fellow Members of Congress, who have proven to me that if you work hard enough, our government can provide for the people.

I truly believe that the best legislation is always bipartisan, and I hope our Congress can come together more for more meaningful legislation as we did after 9/11, as we did after natural and financial disasters, as we came together during the COVID-19 pandemic, and as we came together in our bipartisan infrastructure bill and so much more.

Believe me, there is no Nation that is better, stronger, or more innovative than the United States when we work together.

I also recognize those who have worked in my office over the years, in-

cluding my district office staff, my D.C. staff, and the staff of the Oversight Committee and the Joint Economic Committee.

Our work truly would not have been possible without your hours of dedication, your intelligence, and your selfless dedication to public service.

To each and every one of my friends and constituents, thank you for your continued support and inspiration. It has been the honor of my life to represent the people of New York's 12th Congressional District.

I also thank my wonderful family, my two amazing daughters, Christina and Virginia; my son-in-law, Peter; and baby Leland. You are the joy and meaning of my life.

Thank you to the love of my life, Cliff Maloney, who is with me in spirit and whose support always meant the world to me.

As I speak today, I am thinking of the important work that lies ahead. Rest assured, I will continue to keep fighting for the issues that are near and dear to my heart, including the Equal Rights Amendment. Let's get it ratified and in our Constitution.

There can be no time limit on equal rights, and the ERA is needed now more than ever to stop any more bulldozing over women's rights.

We need Senator SCHUMER, and over 150 of my colleagues have joined me in writing to him and requesting him to put the time limit bill on the floor for a vote so that the American people can see who is for equal rights and who is against it.

Infrastructure is in my DNA, especially in these times when modernization and new systems for transportation are so vital to our future.

I am proud that the two largest federally funded construction projects—not in New York City, not in New York State, but in the entire country—are in the district I am privileged to represent, the Second Avenue Subway and the East Side Connector.

I am proud to have brought more than \$10 billion in infrastructure funding to my district alone, and as I part, I will continue to work toward building high-speed rail between New York and Boston. Nothing would build our economy stronger or better.

My dear colleagues, together we have bent the moral arc of this Nation in the direction of justice and fairness, but we mustn't rest until equal means just that—equal.

Finally, I have always regarded public service as a loan, one that I must repay each and every day I am in office. Thanks to your tireless efforts, wisdom, and support, I feel like I leave office debt-free.

The best is yet to come.

It has been an honor to work and serve with all of my colleagues.

Mr. LEVIN of Michigan. Representative MALONEY, your account is overflowing with the work of justice that you did for the people of New York and, indeed, the American people. We all know it, so thank you so much.

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. It has been a privilege to be inspired and to work with you, and thank you for being arrested with me—

Mr. LEVIN of Michigan. That was quite an honor.

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York.—as we protested for the rights of women to make decisions about their own bodies. I would say there is no democracy if you cannot make your own healthcare decisions.

Mr. LEVIN of Michigan. That sounds right to me.

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. It was an honor to work with you. I will miss all of my colleagues.

Mr. LEVIN of Michigan. It was a big honor to be arrested with you.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my wife, Mary Freeman, and my kids, Koby, Saul, Ben, and Molly.

It has been a real honor to serve in this body, and I promise to keep the fire under your feet to do the work of justice.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

#### MATH REALITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BOWMAN). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2021, the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. SCHWEIKERT) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Mr. Speaker, we are going to continue sort of a theme that we have been working on, and it is fairly simple, yet the solutions are really complex.

First is trying to get a reality on what is going on with the math. I am a broken record. I absolutely am, but we are going to walk through this again.

Doing this a week ago, we actually did a whole bunch of technology disruptions that would crash the price of healthcare, that would clean the environment, that would make bureaucracy much smaller, make us much more productive and wealthy as a society, help the poor, help the working poor, help the working middle class.

It is fascinating. Sometimes we all make the mistake of reading the responses, trying to understand, saying are we getting the message through. A number of our brothers and sisters out there are kind enough to comment, kind enough to help us, but also kind enough to say: "Hey, I didn't understand this. I don't understand what this number really means."

We are going to delve into a couple of those because the crisis is here, and it is not Democrat or Republican. I am going to argue it is much more difficult. It is demographics.

There is a whole bunch of mess that I believe our Republican majority next year is going to have to clean up, and God willing, we will have the fortitude to do it. But the fact of the matter is, over the next 30 years, there are some really ugly numbers, and it has to do

with the fact that we got old as a society.

Our baby boomers are retiring, and almost no one is comfortable telling the truth. So, we are going to rapidly go through a number of these.

Look, this is a board I show over and over just to try to help people get their heads around it. See this red here? We are not even going to talk about 1965. We are going to stick with 2022, so last year's budget cycle.

Remember, we are running on continuing resolutions, so there is all sorts of other budgetary malfeasance going on around here, but here is where we are at.

Do you see this red here? That is for last year's budget cycle, 71 percent of all the spending, and it is on autopilot because this is: Hey, I turned 65. I get a health benefit. I worked so many quarters, and I turned 65 or 70, wherever you choose, and you get Medicare or Social Security, or you served in the military.

You have to understand. The vast majority of your government is on autopilot.

This blue here, that is defense. So, 13 percent of the 2022 budget was defense.

The other 16 percent was what we call nondefense discretionary. That is the EPA. That is the FBI. That is the Park Service. That is everything you actually think of as government. It is functionally only 16 percent of the spending.

There are a number of us who keep looking at different ideas and different numbers, and we keep trying to say: What would happen if we actually took all the outlays and rolled them back to 2019 before the pandemic?

□ 1445

But some of the math—forgive me, but we were working on this as we were walking over here to the floor—you have a math problem. First off, the discretionary has shrunk from—let's see, it is \$52 billion bigger in 2022 than it was in 2019. So that is real money.

But what has exploded are two things, the mandatory Social Security, Medicare and all these other things that are formula and interest. In 2019 we spent basically \$376 billion in interest. We are functionally heading towards doubling that in the coming budget cycle.

So we have got to decide, if I could adopt the 2019 budget, we would actually, with the really substantial increases we have had in tax receipts, tax revenues, tax collections, whatever you want to call it, if we adopted the full 2019 budget then we would be even.

How many Members of Congress are ready to get up here and say we are going to cut Medicare, we are going to cut Social Security, we are going to cut veterans benefits, and we are going to actually somehow pay less interest on our debt?

The point I am trying to make is the vast majority of what is government is autopilot. And what we actually de-

bate, the theater around here—so in 2019, 50 percent was what we will call discretionary, 50 percent was defense, the other 50 percent of that \$1 trillion 33 billion, half of it was true discretionary. I'm trying to make the point, if you are going to save us, it has got to be an actual discussion, mostly about healthcare costs.

I am going to show you some boards here. This is another one I bring back and forth. I am shocked how many of my brothers and sisters actually—hopefully, watching parts of this, or their staff are watching parts of this on their televisions, there are a few hundred televisions around this campus—will digest—and for some of my brothers and sisters on the left, they actually get really upset with me on this, you can't tell people that.

But it is the math.

Over the next 30 years, so starting today, 30 years from now—I am getting tired of hearing myself say this, but I can't seem to get my brothers and sisters around here to digest the number—we are functionally going to borrow \$114 trillion in today's dollars, and \$38 trillion of that is the shortfall in Social Security.

When we add up here is our shortfall and here are our financing costs, \$80.5 trillion is the shortfall in Medicare, so about 75/25.

How many politicians do you hear, Mr. Speaker, how many accountants, how many smart people do you see talking on financial television saying, Hey, we are heading toward a debt crisis, and it is healthcare costs.

Oh, by the way, the rest of the Federal budget actually has about \$1 trillion, a \$1.9 trillion positive balance. You have to understand, Mr. Speaker, it is autopilot.

These are earned benefits. Your society, your government, and your country made a deal with you, if you work this many quarters and you reach this certain age, if you are part of a certain Tribal group or other things, then you get these certain benefits. Fine.

Do you think back 20 years ago if we had taken a little sliver of Social Security and allowed the individual to put it in private accounts, the accounts would have been so much more robust?

The Democrats absolutely demagogued that, oh, it is the end of the world.

And now here we are 20 years later, and we are a decade away from the Social Security trust fund being gone.

How many Members here get behind these microphones and are willing to tell their constituents the truth, that you are headed toward a 25 to 27 percent cut in Social Security unless we come up with some big, bold solution?

The problem is the Congress says, Oh, let's just raise taxes.

Except the problem is that that is just the Social Security portion. Medicare is three-quarters of all the coming debt, and the amount of taxes you have to raise—are you prepared for the amount that that actually starts to slow down the economy?

So there is another board. I haven't shown this one in about a year. This is actually 2020 data. The numbers are actually much worse today because of healthcare inflation. I live in a place that has about 12 percent inflation, the Phoenix-Scottsdale area is the highest in the continental United States. But base inflation, healthcare inflation, is up around 16 percent. So these numbers are much uglier today.

This is really uncomfortable, and this makes people upset. But it is the math.

A typical couple retiring—so let's say you are retiring right now. You functionally are going to receive 3 bucks for every dollar you put in. It is the math.

Now, on Social Security, basically you get what you put back in. You get a little bit of a spiff, but if you had actually been able to put those dollars into the markets or into some bond, you would be much better. But on Social Security you basically get back what you put in.

The problem is for that couple on Medicare taxes, you will have paid about \$161,000 in taxes, and you are going to get about \$522,000 in benefits. It is this gap right here that bankrupts our country. It is healthcare costs. It is the math.

I know it upsets people. If you want to read the actuarial reports, Mr. Speaker, we will be happy to send them to you. But it is the truth.

At some point, the political class needs to start treating the public like adults and tell us the truth even when it is not what the political class here has said, It is waste and fraud; we don't tax rich people enough.

All that is a fraud.

And going on right now, you have got to understand, the numbers are rolling on us. All the trillions and trillions of dollars of stimulus that were pumped into the economy has set off inflation that has made almost every American poorer. You have to understand that inflation is higher than wage growth. You are poorer today than you were 1 year ago.

How many of my brothers and sisters on the other side do you see get behind the microphones and show like they give a damn that America's workers and poor people are poorer today?

Well, let's subsidize them more instead of blowing up the economy.

And now you start to look at what is going on. At this moment, we are already at one-quarter trillion dollars in debt. Remember, our fiscal year began October 1, and our spending is still exploding.

The Federal Government spent \$500 billion last month, and we are supposed to be out of the COVID spending craze, and we are not.

I bring this chart just as a simple, simple get our heads around the projection. So these two lines here are the 2021 COVID. You see, there just huge amounts of government spending.

But what is important here is, do you see this line right here?

That is just if you go back to normal life, get rid of these 2 years, just a normal life, the debt is going just where everyone has modeled it.

This isn't new. This has been talked about for one-quarter of a century.

Does anyone remember when one of the senior commanders of the U.S. military came here to Congress and testified and said, I believe the greatest threat to the United States in the long run is our debt?

The spenders around here said, no, you can't talk about that.

One of the reasons I believe the public should be just livid with us is our unwillingness to treat them like adults.

The other thing that is going on—back to telling the truth again—the 1980s, does anyone remember the 1980s?

Apparently, if you did the mean of the interest on U.S. sovereign bonds at that time, we were financing around 10 percent interest rates. But we had this artificially low interest. Now it would have killed you if you were a saver. It killed you if you were trying to save for retirement. It was great if you wanted to go into debt.

I need you to look at something here, Mr. Speaker. During 2020 we had an average of 2.2 percent which was the CBO calculation. They even project that when we go off into the future we are going to double that. And it is already doubled today.

So do we go back to the magic times where we are saying, Hey, we are around 2 percent, 2010, 2 percent for the decade? Or do we double it?

What happens if we double U.S. interest rates?

If we go up 2 percent, 30 years from now we are at 280 percent of debt to GDP.

Do you know, Mr. Speaker, if you go up—I think it was, what was the math long term—I think it is like 25 years of 2 percent increase on here basically consumes every projected dollar of tax receipts?

It is all our money.

How many of us plan to live another 25 years?

How many of us really believe we are going back to the age of 2 percent or less interest on U.S. sovereign debt?

How many of us agree with the Congressional Budget Office that because we are going to be borrowing so much of the world's capital to finance our debt that we are going to push up interest rates for ourselves and the world, and by doing that we drive ourselves into bankruptcy even faster?

Now, you don't actually go bankrupt. What happens is the economy slows down, you live in this flat-lined economy, and there is almost no prosperity. There is no growth, jobs become scarce, and every day you fall further behind. But that is the future. The crap around here is heading there. But we will do some great virtue-signaling bills. Maybe we will ban plastic straws or do something really useful.

And you sit down with our progressive friends and say, okay, let's walk

through your math. Your math, not mine, your math. And understand, if I take your wish list, free college, the climate proposal, jobs guarantee, the Medicare for All, and then add them already on in the 15.7 baseline deficit, which is already higher today because of the growth in interest rates, and then I turn around and say, okay, we are going to tax all unearned income over \$1 million. So if you own rental houses, we are taking every dollar. If you make more than \$1 million, we take every dollar. And we will add into that we are just going to take all the wealth of billionaires; every dime of it.

Hey, why don't we take basically the entire defense budget, and we will just wipe out all defense protecting the country, even though that is constitutional?

It doesn't get you anywhere.

This is the wish list on top of the fact we are already upside down.

Do you understand how loony this place is?

If you go over and over the math, the roster, the tax hikes, if we do all the tax hikes, hey, a 50 percent income rate for anyone making \$200,000 or more, then you start to say we will eliminate all deductions. We are going to take payroll tax, so your FICA tax, and we are unlimiting it, so it just goes through the ceiling. Hey, you make \$1 million, you pay 15.3 percent on that, Social Security, Medicare, unemployment. You take all those corporate taxes and put them back up to 35 percent. And then live in a fantasy world that you didn't slow the economy down.

Do you know you only get two-thirds of the way to covering the structural deficit that is already built in?

That is assuming the fantasy world of hey, I just taxed the crap out of my country, took all of the available investment capital out of the country and consumed it in taxes and government spending, but the economy will still maintain the same GDP growth and there will never be another recession or another virus.

The inability to have adult conversations around here about the proposals are lunacy. They are great politicking. You go home, stand up in front of the town hall, you tell them these things—you are lying to them—and everyone applauds and says, oh, I really want free stuff.

Then you take the best estimate—understand, this number, the 2021, is probably double last year than it will be in the future years because this has huge amounts of COVID fraud. Many of us believe COVID unemployment may be the single biggest fraud maybe in world history. We have seen some underlying reports that it could be a couple hundred billion dollars.

But let's pretend that the fraud and waste of 2021 was something we could capture and that we can get every damn dollar. That is \$662 billion. That is amazing.

□ 1500

Now, it is a one-time thing. You get it back. We were able to collect every dollar and stop all the waste and fraud. Great. Except that we are heading toward \$2 trillion deficits at the end of the decade. So we took care of about a quarter of it.

Now, we need to work our heinies off to get every dollar of waste and fraud out of the system. We need to stop designing insane systems where we hand out money and we are going to figure out if you should have gotten it a year or 2 years or 3 years later. We have got to stop the fantasy that there are simple solutions.

Last week, I stood here, and I showed the board, saying, do you know, if we got rid of every single dollar of foreign aid, the \$38 billion of foreign aid, it paid for about 11 days of borrowing—not spending—borrowing.

I know we have been told over and over, Hey, there are simple solutions: Tax the rich; get rid of foreign aid; waste and fraud. There are rounding errors in the scale of what is hitting us. But there are solutions, and dammit, I need us all—whether you be on the left or the right or the public that is trying to understand—be willing to think differently. Be willing to stop this insanity of, oh, we will just do an entitlement reform. Like that is ever going to happen.

How many Members of Congress are going to come here and say, I cut Social Security and Medicare. It is never going to happen. Nor should we. Those are promises we have a moral obligation to keep.

Another moral obligation is: How do you finance them? How do you keep them? And every Member who refuses to tell you the truth about the math is also putting them at peril.

You can't lie, my brothers and sisters on the left, you got to tell the truth. Playing this game—oh, the 2017 tax reform, oh, it crashed revenues. Do you understand we are a trillion dollars higher in receipts—for those of us on the Ways and Means Committee—than we were when we did the 2017 tax reform?

It is a spending problem. If I had come to you in 2017 and said, Hey, 4 years from now we are going to be taking in \$1 trillion additional revenue, you would have laughed your heinie off—but we did. How can we still be so upside down? How, in this year, when we are still not doing the crazy level of COVID spending, are we still a quarter of a trillion dollars—and we are only, what, into our second or third month of this fiscal year?

I beg of us—you look at charts like this and you understand, it really is a spending, it is a structural spending problem. As I was just showing you the really uncomfortable slide, over the next 30 years it is Medicare and Social Security. It is what it is.

You look at the projections. This slide is incredibly important for all my junior economists out there. We have

times since the 1960s until today, we have had very high marginal tax rates, we have had low marginal tax rates. And guess what, we always seem to come in with high tax rates, low tax rates; good economy, poor economy. We always seem to ultimately come in right about 19 percent of the size of the economy in revenues, in receipts, in taxes. I need you to think about that.

If I want more revenue, I need an economy that grows the size of the Nation, the wealth of this Nation, the prosperity. The poor get less poor, the working middle class get rewarded for their work. Do policies that grow. And the benefit of that is how you get more tax receipts. Because you have got to look here—understand that our spending is heading toward 30 percent of the entire size of the economy.

I know these are geeky numbers, but those are stunning numbers. Yet, the number of times—I showed you before all the projections—well, we will just raise taxes. Then you look at our history when we have done that. The growth—the size of the economy have flatlined or they shrank. The total dollars in aren't what you prayed for.

I want to do a little bit of hope, and I also want to talk about a couple opportunities. When we get back—I don't know when we come back to basically do this horrible omnibus and all these things whether I will get some floor time to go into more depth.

Mr. Speaker, can you share with me my time remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Arizona has 36 minutes remaining.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Mr. Speaker, I am going to finish this up in 6 minutes and yield back to you.

I need us all to come back and think creatively. If I came to my brothers and sister here who are elected, our staff who are all freaky smart—a lot of them institutionalized, but they are smart. The public, who, if they knew the underlining numbers, their creativity could break us through on the crap we are doing.

If I came to you tomorrow, and said, I need ideas that crash the price of healthcare. That for the 5 percent of our brothers and sisters who have multiple chronic conditions that are well over 50 percent of our healthcare spending, what do we do to make them less sick—maybe even cure them?

What do you do to deal with environmental issues but do it in a way where the economy still grows instead of this model the Democrats have brought us—we are just going to subsidize everyone—and then wonder why the math ultimately blows up on us.

There is one opportunity that specifically interests me. I never want to hear another Member basically come behind the microphone and say, We need to regulate this more—or on my side—we need to deregulate this more. Can I beg of us to use the language—why don't we try some smart regulation. Why don't we join this century and use the

technology we all walk around with. We all walk around with supercomputers in our pocket.

We had the Supreme Court case, it was *West Virginia v. EPA*, that basically says Congress has been derelict in its duties for years—decades. Hey, EPA, wink, wink, nod, nod, we want you to do this, but we are not willing to tell our voters what we are willing to do because we are getting lobbied over here, so we are just going to hand over all of our congressional authority, our constitutional authority to a bureaucracy. The Supreme Court said we got to stop doing that.

We do it with the EPA, we do it with securities regulations, we do it with everything. Guess what it means? We are going to have to start acting like adults in this body and actually start reading our bills, working on the details, coming up with rational ways to make society safe, healthy, but prosperous.

I have a little video out there if someone wants to go look at it, it is Schweikert environmental crowdsourcing on YouTube. It is just the simple concept of—you know there are things that you can attach to this that actually would calculate air quality, you know, PM10 or organics and other things.

What would happen if you had a couple thousands of those floating around your community? You would always know what is going on. If you had someone painting cars behind your house, you would catch them immediately. If you had a model like that, do you need the same 1938 command and control system?

So I am the motorcycle paint shop—do they really need to file paperwork and fill up file cabinets full of paper because we all know file cabinets full of paper make the air quality cleaner. If you had a crowdsource model of data, the government could say, screw it, we are going to leave you alone and we are just going to get the bad actors. If you are playing by the rules and you are using your scrubbers and playing by the rules, you get left alone; you don't need the permitting model.

You can crowdsource the data. You can do this with sound and water and transportation and smart cities. It would crash the size of the bureaucracy—and I know a lot of folks would say, What about all the government unionized workers? This is about getting a productivity bump and then holding that bump long term because even if we can use technology to crash the price of healthcare and we don't get enough growth, I can't make the numbers work.

I have a 5-month little boy we are adopting, when he is 25 years old his tax rate will be double all of ours. It is already baked in the cake. It is done. We have already done this to our kids.

Corporate tax rates. I don't know why corporations don't have to disclose that their taxes are doubling over the next 25 years. We make them disclose

things about potential environmental impairments, why didn't they have to disclose the fact that we are going to be doubling their taxes? It is baked into the cake. Because the whole baseline services that we have promised with our population getting older, everyone's taxes are about to be doubled over the next 25 years unless, of course, you use technology to crash the price and dramatically increase the productivity.

This one borders on silly, but it is making a point. The left is absolutely fixated on methane. Okay. Methane is a huge greenhouse gas—okay, we will give them that. You know, a couple years ago we had to recalculate its half-life. It is down to, what, 8 or 9 years, for those of us who actually geek out on this stuff. And, oh, we need to start shutting down the use of hydrocarbons. We need to start calculating the methane load for any barrel of oil or any Btu of gas.

Then there are articles out there saying, you know, there is actually a real cheap, cheap, cheap solution—I am going to be a little silly—I believe it is copper oxidized clay. It is kitty litter. Do you know you can take a well or some other methane production source and it absorbs like a sponge, and it is dirt cheap. You know why? Because it is dirt.

How many Members of Congress have you seen here saying, We need to bring the researchers who did this—and their academic studies—bring them here because we want to understand this. Is there a way we could actually be making the environment cleaner, better, faster, and still keep the economy growing?

No. They are hell-bent on shutting down the use of hydrocarbons even though there are solutions. Why wouldn't this place expand its intellect and be willing to at least bring in the scientists saying: Wow, you did this study, and it really works.

Last week—and I got a little crap for this, and I want to make the point again—we calculate over half a trillion dollars a year in spending for people who don't take their pharmaceuticals properly. I agree. You know, being someone with hypertension, I am working really hard to work out and eat better and see if I can bend it and never have to take a calcium inhibitor or even a statin—that is cholesterol.

We know for a fact that if a population were to take their prescriptions—and some of this is true for diabetes and everything else—it is 16 percent of all healthcare spending. What if you could get half that? Right now we estimate the number is probably \$520, \$530 billion a year in healthcare costs because grandma didn't take her pill, or someone stroked out or those sorts of things—where the pill is pennies.

So a pill bottle cap that beeps at you in the morning that costs 99 cents and reminds you to take it has hundreds of billions of dollars of potential impact. Is that difficult? Well, apparently

around here that idea is difficult—the lack of science, the lack of math, the lack of basic creativity.

And then there is my holy grail. This is truly the holy grail. Truly, I pray to the dear Lord, let what I am reading be true: 33 percent of all America's healthcare spending is diabetes; 31 percent of all Medicare spending is diabetes. Most of that is type 2, it is not type 1. Type 2 in many ways has a lot to it and it is ultimately an autoimmune, but it is partially self-inflicted.

Is this body willing to have one of the most difficult political debates and conversations it has ever considered in modern times? Are we willing to change the farm bill? Are we willing to change the incentives of what we incentivize our brothers and sisters to eat? Are we willing to incentivize our brothers and sisters to be healthy?

You all saw the numbers of the misery this place brought to the Nation with the shutdowns and how many of the ZIP Codes around this country have doubled their obesity numbers. Why this is important is apparently we have been on the cusp—we have had a handful of people who look like they have been cured of type 1 diabetes—it is less than a year, maybe it ultimately doesn't work, but this is a big deal.

□ 1515

Why aren't we working on it? Why aren't we? Because if it is 31 percent of all Medicare spending, and we were able to help our brothers and sisters who are getting their feet cut off and going blind, wouldn't that be the compassionate thing? Wouldn't that be the moral thing instead of this damn conversation we have here? "Well, let's build more clinics so people can manage their misery."

I beg of you, if we are on the edge of a cure for—you saw last week it finally got approved—hemophilia, got a single-shot cure, really expensive. Work out the financing.

Cystic fibrosis, we may be on the cusp.

Sickle cell anemia—why doesn't this place seem to give a damn about people's misery and suffering?

By the way, they are part of the 50 percent that is also really good economics.

I ask anyone that is watching this, think differently. Curing our brothers and sisters, fixating on economic growth, crashing the price of technology by legalizing technology, is the only path I can come up with that saves us from the crushing debt.

The fact of the matter is, if you look at the models, it means the next couple of decades could be really prosperous. I just need this place to act very differently.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

#### THE GOHMERT RULE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of Jan-

uary 4, 2021, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) is recognized for the remainder of the hour as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, how much time is remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman has 25 minutes remaining.

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, there was a quote from John Adams, as a follow-up to what my friend from Arizona (Mr. SCHWEIKERT) was saying. He had great exchanges with his friend, then his enemy, and then his friend again for the rest of their lives, Thomas Jefferson.

John Adams said there are two ways to conquer and enslave a country. One is by the sword; the other is by debt.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate my friend for yielding. This will likely be the last speech that I will be able to give from the House floor. I can imagine there are people clapping all over that are watching C-Span.

It has been a tremendous honor to serve in this hallowed body. It just has.

This was not something that I aspired to from my earlier days, and in fact, I really didn't want to be a judge. After my mother got over the disappointment of my choosing not to apply to med school, and then got used to the idea of having an attorney, she ended up, through the eighties, she knew she had a brain tumor that was going to ultimately take her life. They had done what they could at Mayo Clinic in surgery. They could do no more.

She was brilliant. She put herself through Baylor in 2½ years, while she was working full-time, most of that in the registrar's office.

My brilliant mom taught school as an eighth-grade English teacher for so many years and taught Sunday school for most of her years.

She would say: Louie, you would make a great judge.

I would go: Mother, I don't want to be a judge. There are some lawyers I would hate to sit there and listen to all day. Besides, I make more money than a judge does. I have no interest.

We lost her in January 1991, and after that, I had been thinking about what my brilliant mother used to say. A few months later, I had a judge call me and ask if my female client would go out with him before her trial. It was a civil trial on a breach of contract. I told him, basically, that I couldn't help him, but I knew we needed a new judge.

I tried for months to find somebody that would run against him and talked to all kinds of Republican lawyers that I thought had been considering it. Nobody would step up.

By Thanksgiving—I had to file around the 1st of December—my wife and I both just had this peace that this is what I was supposed to do, is run for judge. So, I did.

As the most politically astute person in our county—Republican, that is—told me the night before the primary election, he said: Nobody gave you a

snowball's chance of winning because this guy was the first Republican elected in the county.

In fact, I had Republican leaders that said: Look, we know it is not great, and there are some issues there, but he was the first Republican elected in our county. We just feel like we owe him the job.

Well, nobody is owed a public service job. By Thanksgiving, we had this peace that this is what I am supposed to do, win or lose. I ran and ended up not just squeaking by, as was predicted the day before in a 50/50 chance of winning. I won with 70 percent of the vote.

After years on the bench, I just had this feeling—I applied the law as it was, whether I liked it or not—but that I needed to go change some of these laws, try to change some of them.

Then, I had the invitation from Governor Perry to an appointment to be chief justice of the court of appeals there. I thought, well, perhaps this is a way to finish my career on the bench. My wife thought so after we prayed about it, contemplated.

Then, when I finished that term, Governor Perry wanted to provide another appointment to the appellate bench. I said no, I think I am supposed to run for Congress. I did and got elected. I won with 70 to 80 percent of the vote ever since.

What I thought was, this country is in trouble, and maybe I can go help get this country on track. Maybe I can make a difference.

After one term, Newt Gingrich—we lost the majority, November 2006, after I had been here 2 years. I was talking to Newt Gingrich about it. He said: I have heard you. You ought to be on the floor every day talking about these issues. We have 2 hours of Special Orders every day.

I thought, maybe so, and I took it to heart. Since then, yes, I have given a lot of Special Orders, talking about the issues that I think are critically important.

When the Democrats took the majority back, my Democrat friend—I hope that doesn't hurt his re-elect,—JOHN GARAMENDI said: Louie, we just voted on the new rules of the House and passed the Gohmert resolution.

I said: What does that mean, JOHN?

He said: It means you can no longer have multiple Special Orders in 1 week. You can only have one. That is the new Gohmert rule. Informally, that is what some of us call it because we don't want to hear you every night.

I had told the Cloakroom years ago, look, if nobody is going to take our time to talk about these issues—there is usually not much of anybody around here on the House floor, but as Newt said, you may have 200,000 to 4 million people watch C-Span at different times. You never know how many are going to watch, but you can make a difference if you talk about what is important.

I told the Cloakroom years ago, look, if somebody is not going to take our time, I will get my tie back on and



come back over there and take it. So, that is what I have done.

Eighteen years later, this country is in deeper trouble than it was when I got here. I know, having gotten my degree in history, and having never stopped studying history, so many great stories, profound stories, about our history.

I know my daughters have suffered abuse from people because they were my daughters, not that they agreed with me on everything. In fact, we have disagreements. I love them, and I never meant for them to suffer.

Recently, I read a sermon that was prepared by Pastor Tommy Nelson in Texas. There was a Governor, Thomas Nelson, of Virginia, who was a commander back during the Revolution. In 1781, Yorktown is surrounded. General Lafayette comes over and says: General, Governor, where should we fire first with our cannons?

Governor Nelson, General Nelson, he knew that the British command was in his home. They had taken his home. They made it their command center. He told Lafayette: Right there at my house.

There were some, reportedly, that said: We don't want to fire at that. It is your house.

He said: That is where the enemy is. That is where you have to fire.

Cannonball after cannonball went through his home.

The Founders suffered so much, gave so much, many with their lives. You look at the 56 signers of the Declaration of Independence, they suffered immeasurably. Many of them forfeited their lives for the cause of freedom.

But John Adams, in one of his letters to Jefferson, toward the end of his life, he said: "The general principles on which the Fathers"—talking about the Founding Fathers—"achieved independence" were "the general principles of Christianity. . . . I will avow that I then believed, and now believe, that those general principles of Christianity are as eternal and immutable as the existence and attributes of God."

John Jay himself, one of the authors of the Federalist Papers, a Supreme Court Justice, our Nation's first Chief Justice, he wrote in his own handwriting: "The Bible is the best of all books for it is the Word of God and teaches us the way to be happy in this world and in the next. Continue, therefore, to read it and to regulate your life by its precepts."

Back to John Adams. He said: "The jaws of power are always open to devour, and her arm is always stretched out, if possible, to destroy the freedom of thinking, speaking, and writing."

Boy, he was so astute and wise.

He said: "Democracy will soon degenerate into an anarchy, such an anarchy that every man will do what is right in his own eyes, and no man's life or property or reputation or liberty will be secure."

It is so true. He saw what happens even in the few democracies or repub-

lics that have ever existed. I think ours is not just a republic, but a form of democratic republic where we elect our representatives instead of like ancient Greece, Athens, where they actually had everybody participate in the big decisions.

I do have a heavy heart. I see what is going on. We had a hearing today regarding mass shootings, witnesses from Sandy Hook, from Uvalde, and they are saying we have to get rid of the guns, like getting rid of spoons would get rid of obesity.

The problem is not with our Second Amendment right. It is exactly what John Adams pointed out. He said: "We have no government armed with power capable of contending with human passions unbridled by morality and religion. Avarice, ambition, revenge, or gallantry would break the strongest cords of our Constitution as a whale goes through a net."

Then he said: "Our Constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other."

□ 1530

Our problem is very clear to me. It is not with weapons. It is with the lack of morality. It is exactly what President Adams said over 200 years ago. He saw it. If you are not teaching children that there is absolute right and wrong—there may be gray areas. There are, as every lawyer would tell you. But there are some absolutes that are right or wrong.

Those of us who believe the Bible, God made clear that the children of Israel were to teach their children: Keep the verses of scripture all around all the time, put them on your doorposts. And I knew that; I had seen the scripture.

But the first time I was at the King David Hotel in Jerusalem, I said, What are these little tubes on the door?

Well, they were verses of scripture. They took it literally.

You need to have those verses everywhere. Teach your children. And we have not done that.

So after people like Bill Ayers, Weather Underground, violent hippies, after they had tried to push us into a Marxist country or make us one and they had no success whatsoever, the violence didn't help, they realized the way to go is to go into the universities, get tenure, and in the meantime be teaching future teachers that Marxism is a good idea. Whether you call it socialism, progressivism—not change the name, call it progressivism. It is still Marxism.

But as Dostoevsky said in response to this nut named Marx in the 1800s, The problem with Marxism is not economic. We know that is a huge problem. It is always going to fail. But the problem with Marxism is atheism because the government has to become God. That is what he was meaning. That has, for so many people, become God.

I came here thinking, gosh, if we could just get enough Members of Congress to stand up for what is right and preserve our freedom—I ultimately have realized, Congress—as upset as people are at Congress, and we rate very poorly in the polls—Congress is a reflection of this country. You don't like what is going on in Congress, well, it is a reflection of what is going on in the country.

This House is the only elected body that I am aware of in the whole country where you can only get there by being elected. If a Senator leaves or dies, they can be appointed or elected, either one, but normally appointed to fill until the election. This body, you can't get in here as a Member unless you have been elected.

Adams said, "Cities may be rebuilt and a people reduced to poverty may acquire fresh property, but a constitution of government, once changed from freedom, can never be restored. Liberty once lost is lost forever. When the people once surrender their share in the legislature and their right of defending the limitations on government and of resisting every encroachment upon them, they can never regain it."

If we want Congress to be better, the country has got to become better, because we are headed toward Marxism. Many realize that. If you looked at the original Black Lives Matter—and it was never about Black lives. It was about moving toward Marxism. One of their tenets—they took it off. One of their goals was eliminating western-style marriage.

Western-style marriage? We don't have western-style marriage.

Moses said God told him a man shall leave his father and mother, a woman leave her home, and the two will become one. That is marriage. It was for procreation of the Nation of Israel and for the people. And civilizations that lasted have based their growth on that societal building block, the family.

Then you had Jesus. When asked about marriage, and particularly divorce, He quoted Moses verbatim: A man shall leave his father and mother, a woman leave her home, the two will become one flesh. And He is the one who added, and let what God has joined together, let no one put asunder, or separate.

But this body, just this month, we come in here, now that we have a majority that is much wiser—it is a bipartisan majority that is wiser than Moses and Jesus—said no, no, no, we will tell you what marriage is.

So churches that supported that, they are going to find out you either become woke or the United States Government is going to come destroy your entity, church, or school. That is where we are heading. Perhaps the Supreme Court will protect us. Maybe it won't.

But I still hear Justice Scalia. We were having lunch, and he said, you guys have the ultimate power. You can stop anything. You have got the power of the purse. You don't like something;

you can kill it. Just cut off all the funding. So don't come running over across the street to us just because you don't have the nerve to do what you think should be done. Come run to us? You didn't do what you have got the power to do.

We haven't done that. Easier to hope maybe the Supreme Court will take care of it.

Adams also said, Remember, democracy never lasts long. It soon wastes, exhausts, and murders itself. There was never democracy or a democratic republic yet that did not commit suicide.

He said, Be not intimidated nor suffer yourselves to be wheedled out of your liberties by any pretense of politeness, delicacy, or decency. These, as they are often used, are but three different names for hypocrisy, chicanery, and cowardice. I mentioned this when I was reading Tommy Nelson's sermon.

But Alexis de Tocqueville in the 1830s and 1840s, he said: "Upon my arrival in the United States, the religious aspect of the country was the first thing that struck my attention; and the longer I stayed there the more did I perceive the great political consequences resulting from this state of things, to which I was unaccustomed. In France, I had almost always seen the spirit of religion and the spirit of freedom pursuing courses diametrically opposed to each other; but in America I found that they were intimately united, and that they reigned in common over the same country."

He talked about our Founders. Forget 1619 or whatever. He says—he is talking about the Founders. They brought with them a form of Christianity. Yes, some people pushed slavery. But Thomas Jefferson, in that original Declaration of Independence, one of the grievances was against King George for ever allowing slavery to get started, because he saw the damage it was doing to America and to the people that were involved.

But Alexis de Tocqueville said about our Founders: "They brought with them . . . a form of Christianity which I cannot better describe than by styling it a democratic and republican religion. . . . from the earliest settlement of the immigrants, politics and religion contracted an alliance which has never been dissolved"—until recent history. He didn't live to see what is going on now.

Look, some of us get beat up. We do believe a woman has every right and should make all the decisions concerning her body. She does. She should. That is the way it should be. She has every right to make decisions for that unborn child that she is carrying. But if a decision is made to kill that other body, that is normally when government gets involved, because we are supposed to protect the most vulnerable among us.

Some people continue to try to say, gee, we didn't see Christianity mentioned in the Constitution. Of course, the Declaration of Independence men-

tions our Creator and also nature's God. But actually if you look at the way the Constitution was signed, it was signed "In the year of our Lord 1787." Yeah, that is the way they dated it. I mean, it is amazing. Some people say it is unconstitutional to sign anything with that date if it is government. Well, if it is signed like the Constitution is signed, I don't see how it could be unconstitutional.

But there was the First Presbytery of the Eastward, a group of clergy from Massachusetts and New Hampshire, and they wanted Christianity to be mentioned in the Constitution. They wrote a letter and they declared that as they see, because of Washington's piety and his support for Christian morality—which really is Judeo—but that morality that they see, means we are in good hands.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

#### BANNING AMERICAN INVESTMENTS IN CRYPTOCURRENCY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2021, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. SHERMAN) for 30 minutes.

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, for 5 years, I have been trying to ban American investments in cryptocurrency. I am the only Member of this House to get an F grade from the only crypto-promoting organization that rates Members of Congress.

My fear is that we will view Sam Bankman-Fried as just one big snake in the crypto garden of Eden. The fact is, crypto is a garden of snakes.

Now, from the outside, crypto just looks like a token, an electronic pet rock for the 21st century, something that might be good to invest in—though it has no apparent value—because you might get somebody else to buy it from you for more than you paid for it.

But in reality, crypto aspires to be a currency and compete with the U.S. dollar. It is not a currency yet, but if it has any long-term value, it is because its promoters are successful in turning it into a currency.

Now, the U.S. dollar is an excellent currency. It is a medium of exchange that will be used billions of times today for people to buy this or that. It is a medium of exchange. It is a measure of value.

So how can a cryptocurrency compete with the U.S. dollar and other established currencies?

Whenever you come up with a new product, you find an advantage that you think you have—at least for part of the market—of your product over the incumbent products, and then you name your product after that advantage.

□ 1545

The advantage that crypto hopes to be its ticket to become a currency is

right there in the name: Cryptocurrency literally means hidden money.

Well, is there a big market for hidden money? Well, there are the drug dealers, the human traffickers, the sanctions evaders who will find that to be a good feature. As Sam Bankman-Fried would tell you today, there is a hell of a market for those who need a currency that will help them hide assets from the bankruptcy courts. But the true big market for a hidden currency is tax evasion.

Now, I know there are some on the other side who are kind of happy every time the IRS is defeated. It is said that anytime a billionaire successfully cheats on his taxes, a member of the Freedom Caucus earns his wings.

The other announced purpose of cryptocurrency design is not just to be a currency available to those who want hidden money, but to compete with the U.S. dollar as a world reserve currency. This would enrich the crypto oligarchs beyond measure and take thousands of dollars a year of advantage away from every American family because every American benefits from the fact that the U.S. dollar is the established world currency.

Now, Sam Bankman-Fried, or should I say inmate 14372, had one purpose in his efforts in Congress. And he was well known in Congress. The only one wearing shorts walking around. His one purpose was to keep the SEC, the Securities and Exchange Commission, out of the crypto world to provide a patina of regulation, baby regulation by assigning crypto to the Commodity Futures Trading Commission, an organization a little laxer and a lot smaller than the SEC.

I have one admonition for my colleagues. Don't trash Sam Bankman-Fried and then pass his bill. I fear this could happen because Sam was not the only crypto oligarch with PACs and lobbyists and all the pressure and all the money coming from the pro-crypto side. There is no PAC in Washington, there is no lobbyist here getting paid millions of dollars to work for efficient law enforcement or investor protection or sanctions enforcement.

Now, I have heard some criticize the SEC, and I will do a little bit of that later in this speech. In July, I chaired a hearing of our subcommittee, the Investor Protection, Entrepreneurship, and Capital Markets Subcommittee, and pushed the SEC's head of enforcement for not doing what should have been done, and that is to go after every crypto exchange because the SEC has taken the position in court that virtually every cryptocurrency is, in fact, an unregistered security. That means that every crypto exchange is an illegal exchange. But the SEC has been unwilling to act on that conclusion because they are under intense pressure from a few in Congress.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD a letter signed by 19 Members of Congress that was designed as a push-back

pitch, if you know baseball, to push the SEC out of enforcement of crypto.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,

Washington, DC, July 15, 2022.

Hon. GARY GENSLER,  
Chair, U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission,  
Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIR GENSLER: We are writing to you today to express our concerns regarding the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) staff's issuance of Staff Accounting Bulletin 121 (Bulletin or SAB 121). The Bulletin provides interpretive staff guidance from the Division of Corporation Finance and the Office of the Chief Accountant (OCA) regarding the accounting of, and associated disclosures relating to, entities holding digital assets on behalf of consumers. In this emerging market, consumer protection is important. However, if SAB 121 is applied as currently written it could have a chilling impact on all market participants that engage in custodial services of digital assets and ultimately harm consumers engaging in the market. We further believe that adherence to a transparent process that allows for public input would be beneficial to ensure complete understanding of the guidance's impact to the industry.

As written, the Bulletin could be read to broadly obligate entities, including banks, engaged in digital asset products or services to adjust their accounting treatment of these assets from off-balance sheet to on-balance sheet. This potential interpretation would significantly alter, or perhaps distort the accounting treatment of custodied digital assets.

For example, custody of consumer assets is a core banking function. As pointedly stated by Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell, "Custody assets are off balance sheet, have always been". This function has an existing regulatory infrastructure that keeps these consumer assets off the bank's balance sheet and ensures consumers remain whole in the event of bankruptcy or other activities that might harm the consumer. Further, in 2021, the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency (OCC) issued its Interpretive Letter 1170, which provided banks guidance on the custody of digital assets. Subsequently, the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, and OCC engaged in a crypto-asset policy sprint initiative, which identified custody as a key area where they intend to provide greater clarity.

These efforts provided the opportunity for banks to confidently be involved in the digital asset ecosystem provided that the banks engage in a safe and sound manner. Such confidence from clear guidance promotes banks to engage in innovative digital asset use cases that leverage the existing regulatory and accounting treatment of custodied assets which will help bring the regulatory oversight and controls desired by so many to the digital asset space.

Without amendment or clarification to the Bulletin, the implication of digital assets held by custodial service providers including banks, on-balance sheet would make custody of digital assets economically infeasible.

We are also concerned about the SEC's approach to emerging crypto activities and the broader market. Particularly, we believe the SEC has not adhered to a proper process, transparency, or public engagement. On the contrary, the SEC has taken an enforcement-first approach and relied on staff guidance, citing purported "increased risks" presented by digital assets. Due to the emerging nature of digital assets in the financial services ecosystem, the Bulletin functions as de facto rulemaking to the industry that creates enforceable obligations for firms. The

creation of enforceable obligations is beyond the remit of staff guidance, and therefore should have been issued pursuant to a formal notice of proposed rulemaking from the SEC in concert with other agencies.

In closing, we request that you withdraw SAB 121 as written and permit a comment period for such a significant accounting change. Further, it is our belief that the SEC should recognize the importance and benefit of the regulatory environment that exists for industry participants that choose to hold digital assets in their custody, as well as the precedent in accounting treatment for traditionally custodied assets.

Sincerely,

Trey Hollingsworth, Bill Huizenga, Warren Davidson, Ted Budd, Andy Barr, William R. Timmons IV, Roger Williams, Ann Wagner, Alexander X. Mooney, Lance Gooden, Tom Emmer, Anthony Gonzales, Pete Sessions, J. French Hill, John W. Rose, Ralph Norman, Van Taylor, Lee Zeldin, Bryan Steil.

Mr. SHERMAN. Now, this letter tells the SEC to back off, and here is the quoted language, from dealing with the "purported risk of digital assets."

Well, it is a few months after that letter was written, and there are a lot of people who sent their money to the Bahamas who do not think that the risk of digital assets is merely purported.

I would also include in the RECORD, there hopefully being no objection, statements from eight members of the Financial Services Committee on the Republican side that were designed to attack the SEC from even trying to get involved in the regulation of cryptocurrency.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair cannot entertain that request.

Mr. SHERMAN. Now, the crypto industry knows that their arguments are bad, and the advice given to anyone who has a bad public policy is when you come to Washington, you better bring a lot of money. It is being said that Sam Bankman-Fried showered money on Democrats, but what actually happened is exemplified by his statements just last month. He said he gave equal amounts to Democrats and Republicans. He gave the money to Democrats above the table, and he gave the money to Republicans to dark money organizations, super-secret super-PACs.

He explained his reasoning, and it actually makes sense. He says the press is liberal. I know my colleagues on the Republican side agree with that, and that the press would vilify him if he was giving money to Republicans. So he gave the money to Democrats above the table, to Republicans under the table, and according to him kept it about equal.

But, of course, Sam Bankman-Fried wasn't the only one involved in FTX. We have also his co-CEO of one of the FTX organizations, Ryan Salame, who gave many tens of millions of dollars exclusively to Republicans.

Now, I want to discuss the role that crypto plays in light of our capital markets. Our capital markets are designed to get people with savings to be willing to take risks to use, what

economists have called for over a century, animal spirits, and to take the risk and invest as equity capital, sometimes debt capital, in businesses that make America great, that provide jobs, that create products, or invest in municipal bonds and build a school, build a hospital, build a road.

And especially that risk capital, that equity capital, we encourage by spending hundreds of billions of dollars a year through our tax system to provide a capital gains allowance, a much lower tax for those who make money by taking risks and investing their capital.

But what role does crypto play in this? It takes those animal spirits, that limited supply of capital that people are willing to put at risk, and diverts them into betting on crypto tokens, where the investment does nothing to provide jobs or to build plants.

I think, though, I may have overstated because the crypto world does create some jobs: Jobs in crypto mining, which is to say jobs in coal mining. You see, the way you get crypto is you get a whole bank of computers to do literally trillions of calculations, and if you do those calculations, with a little luck you get a bitcoin. And so the big cost is not the computers, believe it or not, it is the electricity. So we have coal miners mining coal to fuel coal plants that were previously mothballed and have been taken out of mothballs to create the electricity to allow people to mine bitcoin.

Now, it has not always done with coal. Iran is subject to our sanctions, as well they should be. In fact, I got involved in looking at crypto by seeing what role crypto might play in undermining our sanctions of Iran, which is working right now to develop a nuclear weapon.

Iran, due to these sanctions, can't export all its oil. What do they do with the oil? They burn it, create electricity, mine crypto, and then they have a hidden currency that they can use to fund Hamas, Hezbollah, the Houthis, and those are just the terrorist organizations whose names begin with H that are funded by the Government of Iran, which is engaged in crypto mining right now.

So one of the issues is, will crypto succeed? Not if we are successful in imposing the Know Your Customer anti-money laundering laws to the entire crypto ecosystem because if you take the hidden away from the cryptocurrency, it has no advantage over the dollar as a currency.

But we in Washington may fail to act. After all, the money and the power is in the hands of the crypto billionaires. But the bigger threat to crypto is crypto. I will explain that by talking a little bit about the theory of currency.

How is it that any currency acquires value? Well, many millennia ago, our species in various places all decided that gold was valuable. Hire an anthropologist, maybe they can explain why,

but gold has had value as far back as history goes.

The U.S. Government then created a paper dollar tied to gold, redeemable in gold, a fixed amount of gold, and then centuries later, because people were used to the dollar itself being valuable—they had forgotten how tied to gold it was—the currency was valuable in and of itself, and the tie to gold was eliminated.

Now, of course, you don't even deal with paper dollars all that often. It is an electronic representation of a paper dollar that used to be a representation of solid gold.

So some smart guys who knew a lot about computer programming, et cetera, decided, Well, why can't we do that? If the U.S. Government is able to print money, why can't we print money? And since money isn't actually printed on paper, but is electronic, why can't we create electronic money? And so they did.

They argued one thing, that the amount of bitcoin, or whatever cryptocurrency it was, was finite. Only a certain amount could be mined. Now, they assured us there is no back door that would allow the creators to create an unlimited amount of bitcoin and, after all, if you can't trust the people in the crypto industry, who can you trust?

But even if there is a finite amount of this or that cryptocurrency, there is an infinite number of cryptocurrencies. Compare that to fiat currencies, to governmental currencies. There are a couple hundred countries in the world. That is it. Those are the ones that can create governmental currencies. But every day somebody creates a new cryptocurrency, and we have a plethora of coins, so while there is a finite number of each coin, there is an infinite number of coins.

Furthermore, there is no particular reason to think that one cryptocurrency is more valuable than the other. Is bitcoin more valuable than ethereum? Why? Why not? What about dogecoin? What about hamster coin?

I asked this question in a hearing almost a year ago. One of my nice staffers, I was about to say pesky staffers, tapped me on the shoulder and said: Boss, there already is a hamster coin. So I said, well, gee, what about cobra? There is already a cobra coin.

So I went into the next hearing and said there might be a mongoose coin, and think of what a mongoose could do to a cobra. You know mongooses are able to kill any cobras, and of course a mongoose could really devour a hamster. I put that forward as a joke, identified it as a joke, and 4 hours later somebody created mongoose coin, and a few hours after that it allegedly had a value of hundreds of millions of dollars.

This self-mocking competition for some coins by other coins demonstrating there is an infinite number of coins, and any one of those coins

could be more valuable than the other coin, ultimately will mean that crypto does not emerge as a currency. Compare that to governmental currencies. I mean, certain cryptocurrencies, including mongoose coin, today could be worth absolutely zero, whereas ethereum could be more valuable than bitcoin or not. Could be zero. Whereas the Uruguayan peso will always have a value because there will always be a Uruguay.

The capitalized value of all outstanding Uruguayan pesos will always be considerably less than the U.S. dollar because the United States will always be more important than Uruguay. So you know what the different currencies are tied to. You know the pecking order. You know the size of the United States economy, you know the size of the Uruguayan economy, and if you make up a country and print a currency, it is going to be worthless. You make up a cryptocurrency, could be as valuable as mongoose coin.

So crypto has no apparent value, and yet one cryptocoin competes with the other. I think this is a house of cards that collapses, but not right away. FTX was not the end of the story.

But let's say you are looking for a crypto exchange, God forbid. If you saw FTX, they had no audit at all, and I speak as I believe the only Democratic CPA returning to the next Congress.

□ 1600

I am an old auditor. No audit. You go to a Binance, which right now has had \$3 billion withdrawn in the last 24 hours, and they have no audit, but they did have a proof of reserves done by an auditing firm, but a proof of reserves is not an audit.

Or you could go to Coinbase. They have an audit, but no internal control report on the audit. And if you listen to the testimony of John Ray before the Committee on Financial Services, he is the bankruptcy trustee for what's left of FTX, the focus of his problem or the problem he identified was no internal control.

So you look at the major exchanges, you don't have a true audit with an internal control audit on any of the ones I identified. You have to wonder, why would you want to play in that world.

Now, as I said, the SEC is acting way too slowly. And they need to be aggressive and go after every crypto exchange, if any of the crypto assets being exchanged is a security, and most of them in the opinion of the SEC, is a security.

I wish I could tell you it was cut and dry which cryptocurrencies were securities and which were not. Believe it or not, it all depends upon a statute passed in the 1930s and a court case decided in the 1940s; the *Howey* case.

And so it is probable but not certain that the vast majority but perhaps not all cryptocurrencies are subject to SEC jurisdiction. That is why Sam Bankman-Fried was here in Washington to try to get us to pass a statute

that would reduce or eliminate the likelihood of success that the SEC would have in courts to show that cryptocurrencies are a security, and the crypto exchanges are securities exchanges.

I would hope that emboldened by recent events, that the SEC would shut down these exchanges. They are exchanging unregistered securities.

Now, I would hope that Congress would pass a law at least defining all cryptocurrencies as subject to SEC jurisdiction, but I think given the money and power of people who make money, literally—crypto billionaires, they make money by making money. They have a lot of it.

Now, I know that crypto is down about 60 percent from earlier this year. It is still a lot of money. In every other business, in order to make money, you have to make a product, provide a service. They have made money without doing any of that. It is a very profitable business. And so they will continue to press Congress, I fear successfully, into not passing legislation that undermines the SEC. But for God's sake, I don't think we will be able to pass this legislation making clear that the SEC has jurisdiction. They are going to have to win that one in the courts; I think they will. But for God's sake, let's make sure that we don't pass legislation that undermines the likelihood of the SEC winning in the courts.

Now, I would like to address a cousin of cryptocurrency, stablecoin. Talk about an oxymoron. Some stablecoins have absolutely collapsed. But a well-regulated stablecoin tied to the dollar is really just a money market fund but hipper. Because your grandfather invested in money market funds, coin sounds like cryptocurrency, and your grandfather doesn't understand that. I am not sure anybody understands it.

So stablecoin, if well regulated, is simply a money market fund, but invariably, it is a money market fund tied to crypto investing. If you have an account with a stockbroker, you no doubt have a money market fund where your cash is stored until you decide which stocks to buy, or which bonds to buy. So the money in that money market fund is awaiting deployment in investments that build the American economy.

Stablecoin is just another name for money market fund, but it will be tied to an account with a crypto broker awaiting deployment in dogecoin or mongoose coin or bitcoin, or ethereum, or any one of the cryptocurrencies.

So you can put me down as a skeptic of cryptocurrency. I think I have covered the reasons why it will not succeed, why investment in it is subject to a very substantial risk of theft. And why if, God forbid, and in the unlikely event that it does succeed, it will undermine the power of the U.S. Government to enforce our fiscal and white-collar laws.

I look forward to working with my colleagues to at least make sure that

we do not undercut the possibility of effective regulation of cryptocurrency, that perhaps we provide for the regulation and tough regulation of cryptocurrency with the Know Your Customer and the anti-money laundering statutes and that at least we do no harm.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

#### REFLECTION OF TIME SERVED IN CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2021, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. KINZINGER) for 30 minutes.

Mr. KINZINGER. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I rise today and for the next few minutes, I would like to reflect on my 12 years serving in this body.

I knew from a young age that I wanted to serve our Nation. While I was still in college, I was elected to the McLean County Board, the youngest person ever to do so.

In 2003, I was commissioned in the Air Force, a responsibility that I took very seriously, and one I still serve to this day.

Returning from Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom, I ran for Congress, and I won.

Well, at the time I didn't have a family, I promised to myself to leave them a better country than the one that I inherited. Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, I cannot in good conscience say that I have done that.

When preparing this speech, I knew that reflecting on our country's past would be the guiding light to our destiny.

What made the experiment of our great Nation so remarkable was that the American people put their faith in their fellow citizens to tell the truth and make difficult choices.

We have taken these ideals for granted for far too long. Instead of using our platform to advance the well-being of our Nation and our people, we have turned this institution into an echo chamber of lies.

Coming home from war, I truly believed that American democracy was infallible.

How could a Nation that fought a civil war for the freedom of all, a Nation that vanquished fascism and communism in Europe, how could it falter.

How could we stand atop Mount Everest only to decide that we prefer to fight in the mud.

I have sworn an oath, both in uniform and in this office, to protect this Nation and its Constitution. While overseas, I witnessed the dangers that radicalization of beliefs can have on people in Iraq and Afghanistan. Sadly, since coming to Congress, I have watched how Republicans and Democrats have weaponized fear in much the same way.

We must not abandon our values or our beliefs in the U.S. Constitution. We

all swore an oath in this very Chamber to support and defend the Constitution of the United States, not a political party and not a single man. Let us renew this belief while casting out those who take the unprecedented call to abolish this sacred document.

Just as Lady Justice looks upon the Constitution and the Old Supreme Court one floor below us, we must remove the blindfold of politics and govern for all Americans when we are executing our duties.

Where Republicans once believed that limited government meant lower taxes and more autonomy, today, limited government means inciting violence against government officials.

Following the tragic Oklahoma City bombing, former President George H.W. Bush publicly refuted those who used fear to gain support. In stark contrast, our leaders today belittle, and in some cases, justify attacks on the U.S. Capitol as "legitimate political discourse."

The once great party of Lincoln, Roosevelt, and Reagan has turned its back on the ideals of liberty and self-governance. Instead, it has embraced lies and deceit.

The Republican Party used to believe in the big tent, which welcomed the tired, the poor, the huddled masses yearning to breathe free. Now, we shelter the ignorant, the racists, who only stoke anger and hatred to those who are different than us.

Our constituents voted us in based on our beliefs, but we cannot use our faith as a sword and a shield while ignoring the fact that we are all children of God, that we are all Americans.

To my Democratic colleagues, you must, too, bear the burden of our failures. Many of you have asked me, Where are all the good Republicans?

Over the past 2 years, Democratic leadership had the opportunity to stand above the fray. Instead, they poured millions of dollars into the campaigns of MAGA Republicans, the same candidates President Biden called a national security threat, to ensure these good Republicans did not make it out of their respective primaries.

This is no longer politics as usual. This is not a game. If you keep stoking the fire, you can't point the fingers when our great experiment goes up in flames.

Unfortunately, there are too few Republicans and Democrats that have the spines to stand up and put country over party. This is not how our Founding Fathers intended for our democracy to function, because, Mr. Speaker, our democracy is not functioning.

When one party's megaphone echoes calls for a civil war and the other tacitly, and in some cases, openly supports it, then we are clearly lost, Mr. Speaker.

Much like the Titanic on its maiden voyage, if Republicans and Democrats don't urgently course correct, I fear we will hit the iceberg right in front of us.

While our politics are more divided now than any time over the past 160

years, we are often reminded of the magic of America at its best.

Following tragedies like the Boston Marathon bombing, or Hurricanes Sandy and Harvey, Americans from all walks of life banded together to support their neighbor, regardless of their political affiliation. Through hardship, hope reigns.

With this in mind, we cannot allow the loudest voice in the room to become the voice of reason. While we in recent years have failed our constituents, there have been times when we have come together to find common-sense solutions to some of the pressing challenges of our times. As a Nation, we achieve more when we work together.

Americans deserve a democracy that values truthful leaders and real dialogue between our parties. It is my belief that we have to put aside our differences and remember that the Nation itself will only survive if the people have faith in one another.

Unfortunately, we now live in a world where lies trump truth, where democracy is being challenged by authoritarianism. If we, America's elected leaders, do not search within ourselves for a way out, I fear that this great experiment will fall into the ash heap of history.

To millions of Americans looking for solutions, not lies, it is up to us to ensure that this ship does not sink. We are being challenged at home and abroad. We must not crumble under the gravity of this moment.

So many men and women around the world would die and have died trying to achieve what we have in the United States. So many of America's sons and daughters, many of whom were my friends, have died protecting it.

As we continue to navigate a challenging and changing world, we must remember the past. Whenever the United States turns its back on humanity, we all suffer the consequences.

Western appeasement of Hitler not only led to the Second World War, but also the genocide of millions of Jews across Europe. Believing that we could leave Europe destroyed following the demise of Nazi Germany only emboldened Communist Russia to repress the Eastern Continent for nearly five decades. Only through continued American engagement did we defeat communism and liberate our European allies to enjoy their God-given freedoms.

Unfortunately, we once again retreated from the world thinking that no one would challenge the sole superpower. Our hubris left a window for 19 men armed with box cutters to murder 2,996 Americans here at home. History has proven that American isolation from world affairs is dangerous.

Over the years, I have been privileged to lead the effort on supporting American leadership in a world drowning in faux strongmen.

Advocating for the rights of Syrian men, women, and children to live without fear of Assad's death squads

shouldn't be political, it is just simply the right thing to do.

Advocating for a stronger American assistance in Ukraine to counter Putin's illegal invasion shouldn't be political, it is just the right thing to do.

By supporting those who believe in freedom, we advance the interests of the American people. Should this Congress or any future Congress decide to turn their back on our alliances and commitments, it will do nothing but embolden our adversaries. None more than the Chinese Communist Party.

□ 1615

It is all but certain that China is gauging their tolerance for pain based on our response to Ukraine. Should we fail to support our allies in Kyiv, China will unleash their own imperial aspiration across the region.

Had I known that standing up for truth would cost me my job, friendships, and even my personal security, I would, without hesitation, do it all over again.

I can rest easy at night knowing that I fulfilled my oath to the office. I know many in this institution cannot do the same.

Some of my most rewarding and memorable accomplishments in Congress have come from working to solve issues directly impacting the 16th District and Illinois as a whole.

Whether it was fighting the opioid epidemic or keeping nuclear power plants running and our bridges standing, to responding to more emergent events like flooding, tornadoes, and even a global pandemic, these projects always felt so personal to me, and I took them seriously.

Even though my time in Congress is coming to an end, I stand here renewing that promise I made over a decade ago to leave this country a far better place than the one I inherited, not only for my son, Christian, but also for future generations.

In closing, I need to first thank God Almighty for his blessings. Without his guidance and protection, I would not be where I am today.

I also thank the hundreds of thousands of Illinoisans who placed their trust in me to represent them in this Chamber. While we may not have always agreed on every issue, I always worked to best represent my constituents and my Nation.

I certainly would not be the man I am today without my family. For my parents, Rus and Jodi Kinzinger, to my wife and newborn son, Sofia and Christian, you have all lifted me in my time of need. While others fled, you stood your ground, and you supported me through thick and thin. For this, I am eternally grateful.

Last but not least, I need to thank my staff, both past and present. Over my 12 years in Congress, I had the privilege of having dedicated young men and women who sacrificed long hours, weekends, holidays, and special events in support of my goals.

Without them, legislating would have been impossible. They serve on the front lines every day, prosecuting casework for my countless constituents, advancing my legislation, and taking the brunt of the vitriol from angry and lost individuals. Their work was never easy, and they never wavered.

I especially thank my chief of staff, Austin Weatherford; my deputy chief of staff and district director, Bonnie Walsh; my legislative director, Sebastian De Luca; my deputy district director, Patrick Doggett; my policy adviser, Paul Laurie; my field representatives and caseworkers, Greg Ridenour, Casey Gross, Luke Phalen, and Leah Bohlmann; my communications director, Theresa Reed; my legislative correspondent, Luke Sandlin; my press assistant, Emily Hayes; and my staff assistant, Anna Brooks Reed.

I was truly blessed to have such a dedicated staff to advise me through this whole process. They have become like family, and I will never forget the work they have done in service to their Nation and me.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

#### ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

Cheryl L. Johnson, Clerk of the House, reported and found truly enrolled bills of the House of the following titles, which were thereupon signed by the Speaker:

H.R. 228. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 2141 Ferry Street in Anderson, California, as the "Norma Connick Post Office Building".

H.R. 263. An act to amend the Lacey Act Amendments of 1981 to clarify provisions enacted by the Captive Wildlife Safety Act, to further the conservation of certain wildlife species, and for other purposes.

H.R. 310. An act to posthumously award the Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to Glen Doherty, Tyrone Woods, J. Christopher Stevens, and Sean Smith, in recognition of their contributions to the Nation.

H.R. 700. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 303 East Mississippi Avenue in Elwood, Illinois, as the "Lawrence M. 'Larry' Walsh Sr. Post Office".

H.R. 1193. An act to amend title IV of the Public Health Service Act to direct the Director of the National Institutes of Health, in consultation with the Director of the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, to establish a program under which the Director of the National Institutes of Health shall support or conduct research on valvular heart disease, and for other purposes.

H.R. 2220. An act to amend title 40, United States Code, to modify the treatment of certain bargain-price options to purchase at less than fair market value, and for other purposes.

H.R. 2930. An act to enhance protections of Native American tangible cultural heritage, and for other purposes.

H.R. 3175. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 135 Main Street in Biloxi, Mississippi, as the "Robert S. McKeithen Post Office Building".

H.R. 3462. An act to require an annual report on the cybersecurity of the Small Business Administration, and for other purposes.

H.R. 5481. An act to name the Department of Veterans Affairs community-based outpatient clinic in Forest City, North Carolina, as the "Master Sergeant Jerry K. Crump VA Clinic".

H.R. 5796. An act to amend title 35, United States Code, to establish a competition to award certificates that can be redeemed to accelerate certain matters at the Patent and Trademark Office, and for other purposes.

H.R. 6614. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 4744 Grand River Avenue in Detroit, Michigan, as the "Rosa Louise McCauley Parks Post Office Building".

H.R. 6722. An act to designate the Department of Veterans Affairs community-based outpatient clinic in French Camp, California, as the "Richard A. Pittman VA Clinic".

H.R. 6863. An act to designate the medical center of the Department of Veterans Affairs in Memphis, Tennessee as the "Lt. Col. Luke Weathers, Jr. VA Medical Center".

H.R. 7077. An act to require the United States Fire Administration to conduct on-site investigations of major fires, and for other purposes.

H.R. 7535. An act to encourage the migration of Federal Government information technology systems to quantum-resistant cryptography, and for other purposes.

H.R. 7903. An act to designate the Department of Veterans Affairs community-based outpatient clinic located in Canton, Michigan, as the "Major General Oliver W. Dillard VA Clinic".

H.R. 7925. An act to designate the Department of Veterans Affairs community-based outpatient clinic located in Palm Desert, California, as the "Sy Kaplan VA Clinic".

#### SENATE ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

The Speaker announced her signature to enrolled bills of the Senate of the following titles:

S. 198.—An act to require the Federal Communications Commission to incorporate data on maternal health outcomes into its broadband health maps.

S. 231.—An act to direct the Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency to develop guidance for firefighters and other emergency response personnel on best practices to protect them from exposure to PFAS and to limit and prevent the release of PFAS into the environment, and for other purposes.

S. 314.—An act to repeal the Klamath Tribe Judgment Fund Act.

S. 1617.—An act to modify the requirements for the Administrator of the Small Business Administration relating to declaring a disaster in a rural area, and for other purposes.

S. 2796.—An act to amend the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 to provide or the eligibility of rural community response pilot programs for funding under the Comprehensive Opioid Abuse Grant Program, and for other purposes.

S. 3092.—An act to amend the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act to improve the provision of certain disaster assistance, and for other purposes.

S. 3115.—An act to remove the 4-year sunset from the Pro bono Work to Empower and Represent Act of 2018.

S. 3499.—An act to amend the Post-Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act of 2006 to repeal certain obsolete requirements, and for other purposes.

S. 3662.—An act to temporarily increase the cost share authority for aqueous film



forming foam input-based testing equipment, and for other purposes.

S. 3825.—An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 3903 Melear Drive in Arlington, Texas, as the “Ron Wright Post Office Building”.

S. 3875.—An act to require the President to develop and maintain products that show the risk of natural hazards across the United States, and for other purposes.

S. 4017.—An act to designate the United States courthouse located at 111 South Highland Avenue in Jackson, Tennessee, as the “James D. Todd United States Courthouse”, and for other purposes.

S. 4052.—An act to reauthorize a program for early detection, diagnosis and treatment regarding deaf and hard-of-hearing newborns, infants, and young children, and for other purposes.

S. 4834.—An act to reauthorize the National Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force Program.

S. 5060.—An act to designate the Federal building located at 212 Third Avenue South in Minneapolis, Minnesota, as the “Paul D. Wellstone Federal Building”, and for other purposes.

## ADJOURNMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 1 of House Resolution 1230, the House stands adjourned until 9:30 a.m. tomorrow.

Thereupon (at 4 o'clock and 18 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Friday, December 16, 2022, at 9:30 a.m.

## REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mr. GRIJALVA: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 2641. A bill to amend the Reclamation Project Act of 1939 to authorize pumped storage hydropower development utilizing multiple Bureau of Reclamation reservoirs (Rept. 117-644). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. GRIJALVA: Committee on Natural Resources. H.R. 2415. A bill to amend the Energy Policy Act of 2005 to require the Secretary of the Interior to establish a program to permanently plug, remediate, and reclaim orphaned wells and the surrounding lands and to provide funds to States and Tribal Governments to permanently plug, remediate, and reclaim orphaned wells and the surrounding lands, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 117-645). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. KILMER: Select Committee on the Modernization of Congress. Final Report Select Committee on the Modernization of Congress (Rept. 117-646). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union.

Mr. SMITH of Washington: Committee on Armed Services. House Resolution 1475. Resolution of inquiry requesting the President and directing the Secretary of Defense to transmit to the House of Representatives any record created on or after January 21, 2021, under the control of the President or the Secretary, respectively, that refers to the Department of Defense and includes certain terms and phrases relating to gender, adversely, with an amendment (Rept. 117-647). Referred to the House Calendar.

## TIME LIMITATION OF REFERRED BILL

Pursuant to clause 2 of rule XII, the following action was taken by the Speaker:

H.R. 6102. Referral to the Committee on Ways and Means extended for a period ending not later than December 23, 2022.

## PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. CURTIS (for himself and Mrs. DINGELL):

H.R. 9567. A bill to allow additional individuals to enroll in standalone dental plans offered through Federal Exchanges; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. ARMSTRONG:

H.R. 9568. A bill to direct the Attorney General to establish a grant program for certain State and local forensic activities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio (for himself and Ms. SCHRIER):

H.R. 9569. A bill to direct the Federal Communications Commission to issue rules for the provision of emergency connectivity service, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. HUIZENGA (for himself and Mr. AUCHINCLOSS):

H.R. 9570. A bill to direct the Securities and Exchange Commission to promulgate rules with respect to the electronic delivery of certain required disclosures, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. BARR:

H.R. 9571. A bill to amend title II of the Public Health Services to provide clarity with respect to coverage of claims against health care practitioners providing health professional volunteer services at community health centers during declared emergencies; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mrs. BEATTY (for herself and Ms. BROWN of Ohio):

H.R. 9572. A bill to direct the Secretary of Health and Human Services to enter into an arrangement with the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine to conduct a comprehensive study on the health care impacts of the use of kinetic impact projectiles in the United States, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. BEYER:

H.R. 9573. A bill to amend section 207 of title 18, United States Code, to prohibit former political appointees from investing in or serving in a managerial role in an investment fund in which a foreign principal owns shares within a certain time period if such investment or managerial role is based on conversations between such appointee and such foreign principal while such appointee was employed by the Federal Government, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. BLUMENAUER (for himself, Mr. FITZPATRICK, and Mr. PHILLIPS):

H.R. 9574. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide a partially refundable credit against payroll taxes for certain restaurants affected by the COVID-19 pandemic; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mrs. BOEBERT (for herself, Mr. DUNCAN, Mrs. MILLER of Illinois, Mr.

GOSAR, Mr. LAMBORN, Mr. BUCK, Mr. STEUBE, Mr. BOST, Mr. NORMAN, Mr. BIGGS, Mr. HICE of Georgia, Mr. CLYDE, Mr. HARRIS, Mr. JACKSON, and Mrs. HARSHBARGER):

H.R. 9575. A bill to prohibit any employee or contractor of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement or the Department of Health and Human Services from transporting any alien across State lines for the purpose of procuring an abortion for such alien; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on the Judiciary, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. CASTOR of Florida (for herself and Mr. LEVIN of Michigan):

H.R. 9576. A bill to require the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to develop and carry out a benchmarking and transparency initiative for commercial and multifamily properties to advance knowledge about building energy and water use and greenhouse gas emissions and inform efforts to reduce energy and water consumption and greenhouse gas emissions nationwide, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Ms. CHU (for herself, Ms. SCHA-KOWSKY, Mr. SMITH of Missouri, and Mr. MULLIN):

H.R. 9577. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to expand access to psychological and behavioral services; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. CICILLINE (for himself, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. BOWMAN, Ms. BROWNLEY, Mr. CÁRDENAS, Mr. CARSON, Mr. CASTEN, Ms. CHU, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. DESAULNIER, Mr. ESPAILLAT, Mr. EVANS, Mr. GOMEZ, Mr. GREEN of Texas, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Ms. JAYAPAL, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. JONES, Mr. LAMB, Ms. LEE of California, Mr. LIEU, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. MCNERNEY, Ms. NEWMAN, Ms. NORTON, Mr. PAYNE, Ms. PINGREE, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Ms. SHAKOWSKY, Mr. TAKANO, Ms. TLAIB, Mr. TORRES of New York, Mr. VARGAS, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Ms. WILLIAMS of Georgia, and Ms. WILSON of Florida):

H.R. 9578. A bill to provide that Donald J. Trump is ineligible to again hold the office of President of the United States or to hold any office, civil or military, under the United States; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. CROW (for himself and Ms. WILSON of Florida):

H.R. 9579. A bill to allow Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Program assistance be used to reduce racial and ethnic disparities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Education and Labor.

By Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois:

H.R. 9580. A bill to improve the identification and support of children and families who experience trauma; to the Committee on Education and Labor, and in addition to the Committees on Energy and Commerce, and the Judiciary, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. DONALDS (for himself, Mr. NEHLS, Mr. GUEST, Mr. BOST, Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois, and Mr. FEENSTRA):

H.R. 9581. A bill to provide emergency relief for American short line railroads, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. FOSTER (for himself and Mr. FEENSTRA):

H.R. 9582. A bill to amend the National Windstorm Impact Reduction Act of 2004 to reauthorize the National Windstorm Impact Reduction Program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, and in addition to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. GOHMERT:

H.R. 9583. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to provide protections for non-violent political protesters, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committee on Intelligence (Permanent Select), for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. HUDSON (for himself and Mr. CORREA):

H.R. 9584. A bill to improve patient access to health care services and provide improved medical care by reducing the excessive burden the liability system places on the health care delivery system; to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. JACOBS of New York:

H.R. 9585. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to impose a tax on foreign-owned under-utilized residential real property; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. LEVIN of Michigan (for himself and Ms. CASTOR of Florida):

H.R. 9586. A bill to require the establishment of a national model building performance standards initiative, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. LEVIN of Michigan:

H.R. 9587. A bill to promote the establishment of mental organizations and provide additional amounts for tenant organizations, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services, and in addition to the Committee on Ways and Means, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. LUETKEMEYER (for himself, Mr. HILL, Mr. TIMMONS, Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas, Mr. GOODEN of Texas, Mr. LUCAS, and Mr. DAVIDSON):

H.R. 9588. A bill to amend the Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act to provide a national standard for financial institution data security and breach notification on behalf of all consumers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. MCHENRY (for himself and Mr. PANETTA):

H.R. 9589. A bill to ensure the successful development of the electronic Income Verification Express Service of the Internal

Revenue Service by amending the Taxpayer First Act to clarify that taxpayer identity verification is the responsibility of users of the system rather than the taxpayer, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin (for herself and Mr. CARSON):

H.R. 9590. A bill to encourage, enhance, and integrate Green Alert plans throughout the United States, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. MORELLE:

H.R. 9591. A bill to require the Secretary of Agriculture to initiate hearings to review Federal milk marketing orders relating to pricing of Class I skim milk, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture.

By Mr. NEHLS (for himself and Ms. HOULAHAN):

H.R. 9592. A bill to amend title 49, United States Code, with respect to restroom access for certain drivers, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

By Mr. PANETTA:

H.R. 9593. A bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to Everett Alvarez, Jr., in recognition of his service to the Nation; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. PANETTA (for himself and Ms. CONWAY):

H.R. 9594. A bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide benefits under the Medicare program for first responders at the age of 57; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. PAPPAS (for himself and Mr. NEWHOUSE):

H.R. 9595. A bill to extend the temporary order for fentanyl-related substances; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committee on the Judiciary, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. PFLUGER (for himself, Mr. ELLZEY, and Ms. SHERRILL):

H.R. 9596. A bill to require a determination of whether certain Chinese entities are responsible for human rights abuses that meet the criteria for the imposition of sanctions under the Global Magnitsky Human Rights Accountability Act or the Uyghur Human Rights Policy Act of 2020; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on the Judiciary, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. PORTER (for herself, Mr. GRIJALVA, and Mr. LOWENTHAL):

H.R. 9597. A bill to create a coordinated domestic wildlife disease surveillance framework for State, Tribal, and local governments to monitor and respond to wildlife disease outbreaks to prevent pandemics, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources, and in addition to the Committees on Agriculture, and Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. SMITH of New Jersey:

H.R. 9598. A bill to require a strategy for countering the People's Republic of China; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committees on Armed Services, Ways and Means, and Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined

by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. SMITH of New Jersey:

H.R. 9599. A bill to require the Secretary of Health and Human Services to revise the Mandatory Guidelines for Federal Workplace Drug Testing Programs to include testing for methadone use and to require the Secretary of Transportation to issue regulations to include testing for methadone use in Department of Transportation drug tests; to the Committee on Oversight and Reform, and in addition to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Ms. SPEIER (for herself, Mr. MCNERNEY, Mr. KHANNA, Ms. ESHOO, Ms. BARRAGAN, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Ms. BROWNLEY, Ms. LEE of California, and Mr. LEVIN of California):

H.R. 9600. A bill to designate the Range of Light National Monument in the State of California, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. TIFFANY (for himself and Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia):

H.R. 9601. A bill to ensure that homicides can be prosecuted under Federal law without regard to the time elapsed between the act or omission that caused the death of the victim and the death itself; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. UNDERWOOD:

H.R. 9602. A bill to improve the public health response to addressing maternal mortality and morbidity during the COVID-19 public health emergency; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and in addition to the Committees on Education and Labor, and Natural Resources, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mrs. WAGNER:

H.R. 9603. A bill to improve the consideration by the Securities and Exchange Commission of the costs and benefits of its regulations and orders; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Ms. WILD (for herself and Mr. FITZPATRICK):

H.R. 9604. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to promote the matriculation, and increase in the graduation rates, of individuals with disabilities within higher education; to the Committee on Education and Labor.

By Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas:

H.R. 9605. A bill to amend the Securities Act of 1933 to expand the research report exception to include reports about any issuer that undertakes a proposed offering of public securities; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. WILSON of South Carolina (for himself, Mr. GOTTHEIMER, Ms. TENNEY, and Mr. VICENTE GONZALEZ of Texas):

H.R. 9606. A bill to direct the Secretary of State to review whether certain Iranian officials are eligible for entry into the United States, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. BARR (for himself, Mr. ALLEN, Mr. HUIZENGA, Mr. MURPHY of North Carolina, Mr. STEIL, Mr. HILL, and Mr. FINSTAD):

H.J. Res. 103. A joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Department of Labor relating to "Prudence and Loyalty in Selecting

Plan Investments and Exercising Shareholder Rights"; to the Committee on Education and Labor.

By Mr. GOTTHEIMER (for himself, Ms. ADAMS, Ms. BONAMICI, Ms. BOURDEAUX, Mr. BRENDAN F. BOYLE of Pennsylvania, Mr. CARBAJAL, Mr. CICILLINE, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. COHEN, Mr. COSTA, Ms. CRAIG, Mr. CROW, Mr. CUELLAR, Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois, Ms. DEGETTE, Mr. EVANS, Ms. LOIS FRANKEL of Florida, Mr. GARBARINO, Ms. GARCIA of Texas, Mr. GOLDEN, Mr. VICENTE GONZALEZ of Texas, Mr. GONZALEZ of Ohio, Mr. GREEN of Texas, Ms. JACOBS of California, Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio, Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota, Mr. JONES, Mr. JOYCE of Ohio, Mr. KATKO, Mrs. KIM of California, Mr. KIM of New Jersey, Mr. LAHOOD, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mrs. LEE of Nevada, Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ, Mr. LIEU, Mrs. LURIA, Mr. MALINOWSKI, Ms. MALLIOTAKIS, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, Mrs. MCBATH, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. MEIJER, Ms. MENG, Mr. MEUSER, Mr. MOULTON, Mrs. MURPHY of Florida, Mr. NEGUSE, Ms. NORTON, Ms. OMAR, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. PANETTA, Mr. PAPPAS, Mr. PASCRELL, Mr. PETERS, Mr. PHILLIPS, Mr. RASKIN, Mr. RICE of South Carolina, Mr. RYAN of New York, Ms. SALAZAR, Mr. SCHNEIDER, Mr. SHERMAN, Ms. SHERRILL, Mr. SIREs, Ms. SLOTKIN, Ms. SPANBERGER, Ms. STEVENS, Mr. STEWART, Mr. SUOZZI, Mr. SWALWELL, Ms. TITUS, Mr. TORRES of New York, Mr. TRONE, Mr. UPTON, Mr. VALADAO, Mr. VAN DREW, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Mr. WESTERMAN, Ms. WILD, Ms. WILLIAMS of Georgia, Mr. BACON, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Ms. MANNING, and Ms. BROWN of Ohio):

H. Res. 1525. A resolution condemning anti-semitism by public figures; to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. LEVIN of Michigan (for himself, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Ms. SLOTKIN, Mrs. SPARTZ, Ms. WILD, and Mrs. WAGNER):

H. Res. 1526. A resolution condemning the illegal abduction of children from Ukraine to the Russian Federation; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. TAKANO (for himself, Mr. CICILLINE, and Mr. COHEN):

H. Res. 1527. A resolution condemning former President Donald J. Trump's calls to terminate the Constitution on the basis of false allegations of widespread voter fraud in the 2020 Presidential election; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

#### CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY STATEMENT

Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the following statements are submitted regarding the specific powers granted to Congress in the Constitution to enact the accompanying bill or joint resolution.

By Mr. CURTIS:

H.R. 9567.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3

By Mr. ARMSTRONG:

H.R. 9568.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clauses 1, 3, and 18

By Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio:

H.R. 9569.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the US Constitution

By Mr. HUIZENGA:

H.R. 9570.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

By Mr. BARR:

H.R. 9571.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18

To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

By Mrs. BEATTY:

H.R. 9572.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution of the United States

By Mr. BEYER:

H.R. 9573.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the power of Congress to make rules for the government and regulation of the land and naval force, as enumerated in Article I, Section 8, Clause 15 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. BLUMENAUER:

H.R. 9574.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 1 of the Constitution

By Mrs. BOEBERT:

H.R. 9575.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The Congress shall have Power To lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States

By Ms. CASTOR of Florida:

H.R. 9576.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

By Ms. CHU:

H.R. 9577.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 1, Section 8, Article 1 of the US Constitution

By Mr. CICILLINE:

H.R. 9578.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution of the United States

Section 3 of the Fourteenth Amendment of the Constitution of the United States

By Mr. CROW:

H.R. 9579.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Clause 18 of Section 8 of Article I of the Constitution

By Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois:

H.R. 9580.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18 of the Constitution: To make all laws which shall be

necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the powers enumerated under section 8 and all other Powers vested by the Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

By Mr. DONALDS:

H.R. 9581.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Art. I, Sec. 8 of the U.S. Constitution

By Mr. FOSTER:

H.R. 9582.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. GOHMERT:

H.R. 9583.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

By Mr. HUDSON:

H.R. 9584.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the Constitution.

By Mr. JACOBS of New York:

H.R. 9585.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8

By Mr. LEVIN of Michigan:

H.R. 9586.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 1 of the Constitution.

By Mr. LEVIN of Michigan:

H.R. 9587.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 1 of the Constitution.

By Mr. LUETKEMEYER:

H.R. 9588.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The constitutional authority on which this bill rests is the explicit power of Congress to regulate commerce in and among the states,

as enumerate in Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3, the Commerce Clause, of the United States Constitution, and Article 1, Section 8, Clause 1, which grants Congress the ability to make laws necessary to carry out that power.

Additionally, Article I, Section 7, Clause 2 of the Constitution allows for every bill passed by the House of Representatives and the Senate and signed by the President to be made law; and therefore it implicitly allows Congress to amend any bill that has been passed by both chambers and signed into law by the President.

By Mr. MCHENRY:

H.R. 9589.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

The Congress shall have power to lay and collect taxes, duties, impost and excises, to pay the debts and provide for the common defense and general welfare of the United States

By Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin:

H.R. 9590.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8

By Mr. MORELLE:

H.R. 9591.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

This bill is enacted pursuant to the power granted to Congress under Article 1, Section 8, Clause 1 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. NEHLS:

H.R. 9592.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. PANETTA:

H.R. 9593.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, clause 18

By Mr. PANETTA:

H.R. 9594.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 18

By Mr. PAPPAS:

H.R. 9595.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18 of the United States Constitution states that "Congress shall have the authority to make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by the Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof."

By Mr. PFLUGER:

H.R. 9596.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18 of the U.S. Constitution

By Ms. PORTER:

H.R. 9597.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8

By Mr. SMITH of New Jersey:

H.R. 9598.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the US Constitution

By Mr. SMITH of New Jersey:

H.R. 9599.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1 Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution

By Ms. SPEIER:

H.R. 9600.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8: Congress shall have the power to regulate commerce among the states, and provide for the general welfare.

By Mr. TIFFANY:

H.R. 9601.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, of the United States Constitution

By Ms. UNDERWOOD:

H.R. 9602.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution.

By Mrs. WAGNER:

H.R. 9603.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8, Clause 3

By Ms. WILD:

H.R. 9604.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I Section VIII

By Mr. WILLIAMS of Texas:

H.R. 9605.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 3:

To regulate commerce with states, other nations, and Native American tribes.

Article 1, Section 8, Clause 18:

Authority to create laws that are necessary and proper to carry out the laws of the land (Necessary and Proper Clause)

By Mr. WILSON of South Carolina:

H.R. 9606.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Article I, Section 8 of the United States Constitution.

By Mr. BARR:

H.J. Res. 103.

Congress has the power to enact this legislation pursuant to the following:

Section 8 of article I of the Constitution.

#### ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 193: Mr. SESSIONS.

H.R. 1010: Mr. CROW.

H.R. 1255: Mr. MEIJER and Mr. DESJARLAIS.

H.R. 1661: Mr. LARSON of Connecticut.

H.R. 2143: Mr. QUIGLEY.

H.R. 2144: Mr. FLOOD.

H.R. 2163: Mr. STANTON, Mr. MRVAN, Mrs. DEMINGS, Mr. MOULTON, and Mr. CARSON.

H.R. 2213: Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 2252: Mrs. PELTOLA and Mr. PENCE.

H.R. 2489: Mr. LEVIN of California.

H.R. 2566: Mr. GROTHMAN.

H.R. 2717: Mr. PANETTA.

H.R. 2734: Mr. LEVIN of California.

H.R. 2820: Mr. LARSON of Connecticut.

H.R. 2840: Mr. RYAN of New York.

H.R. 3135: Mr. KIM of New Jersey.

H.R. 3530: Mr. SESSIONS.

H.R. 4146: Mr. LYNCH.

H.R. 4779: Mr. CARTWRIGHT.

H.R. 5030: Ms. PORTER, Mr. CROW, Mr. POCAN, and Mr. DESAULNIER.

H.R. 5989: Mr. VEASEY.

H.R. 6117: Mr. CLEAVER and Mr. GARCÍA of Illinois.

H.R. 7079: Mr. CUELLAR.

H.R. 7305: Mr. LEVIN of California.

H.R. 7506: Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois and Mr. CRENSHAW.

H.R. 7517: Mr. HARDER of California.

H.R. 7772: Mr. SESSIONS.

H.R. 8015: Mr. LEVIN of California.

H.R. 8190: Mr. DESAULNIER.

H.R. 8614: Mr. COHEN.

H.R. 8616: Mr. SMITH of Washington and Mr. FINSTAD.

H.R. 8685: Ms. ROSS.

H.R. 8709: Mr. SESSIONS.

H.R. 8710: Mr. SESSIONS.

H.R. 8832: Ms. KUSTER.

H.R. 9033: Mr. MAST and Mr. BURGESS.

H.R. 9044: Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. CASTRO of Texas, and Mr. VEASEY.

H.R. 9104: Ms. SANCHEZ.

H.R. 9208: Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. COHEN, and Mr. MCGOVERN.

H.R. 9260: Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. CALVERT, and Ms. CASTOR of Florida.

H.R. 9275: Mr. NEGUSE.

H.R. 9389: Mr. FINSTAD.

H.R. 9394: Mrs. FLORES.

H.R. 9419: Ms. JACKSON LEE and Mr. VEASEY.

H.R. 9460: Mr. COHEN and Mr. SHERMAN.

H.R. 9482: Mr. CARBAJAL and Mr. LOWENTHAL.

H.R. 9503: Mr. GARCÍA of Illinois and Ms. JAYAPAL.

H.R. 9527: Mr. JOYCE of Ohio and Mr. BURGESS.

H.R. 9555: Ms. CASTOR of Florida and Mr. BLUMENAUER.

H.R. 9558: Mr. ALLRED.

H.J. Res. 11: Mr. FINSTAD.

H.J. Res. 87: Mr. PAPPAS.

H. Res. 174: Mrs. AXNE, Ms. OMAR, Mr. PHILLIPS, and Ms. BUSH.

H. Res. 404: Mr. SCHIFF.

H. Res. 644: Mr. SESSIONS.

H. Res. 1069: Mr. RUIZ.

H. Res. 1294: Mr. PANETTA, Mrs. KIM of California, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, and Mr. KEATING.

H. Res. 1392: Mr. BLUMENAUER.

#### PETITIONS, ETC.

Under clause 3 of rule XII,

PT-157. The SPEAKER presented a petition of the City of Coral Gables, Florida, relative to Resolution No. 2022-261, urging the United States Congress to enact a Carbon Border Adjustment; which was referred to the Committee on Ways and Means.